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SANTA ANNA,



Jos. T. Gazzam.

MEXICO:

ITS PEASANTS AND ITS PRIESTS;

OR,

ADVENTURES AND HISTORICAL RESEARCHES IN MEXICO AND ITS SILVER MINES DURING PARTS OF THE YEARS 1851–52–53–54, WITH AN EXPOSE OF THE FABULOUS CHARACTER OF THE STORY OF THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO BY CORTEZ.

BY ROBERT A. WILSON,

LATE JUDGE OF SACRAMENTO DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA.

With Engravings.

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PREFACE TO REVISED EDITION.

The flattering notices which this volume has received from the leading newspapers and periodicals, both in this country and in England, are the inducements to the author, on the occasion of issuing a new edition, not only thoroughly to revise the stereotype plates, but also to avail himself of certain judicious suggestions of critics to add materially to the efficiency of the volume. One suggests that a correct map of the Valley of Mexico should be inserted; another, that a book written with so much apparent candor and fairness ought not to be limited in its usefulness by having a partisan dedication; another, that the title of the book ought to be enlarged sufficiently to cover all the subjects embraced in the volume: all which suggestions have been adopted.

A popular writer, who has favorably noticed the book, desires to know something more of the author, and in this desire he shall be gratified in a few words. The author was born at Cooperstown, in this State, of Anglo-Saxon parents, and this State has ever been his residence excepting the three years and a half he was in California; and now he is not a little surprised when informed that, by the custom-law of the tribe, he is an Iroquois Indian, and by statute of George II. a British subject.

His employments have been as various as could be desired. By turns a student, a trader, a lawyer, Judge

of the Sacramento Gold District, a traveler, and now as an author, he enjoys the doubtful distinction of being the first writer that has applied the common-law rules of evidence to the testimony of Cortéz and Bernal Diaz, the two witnesses upon whose uncorroborated statements the whole fabric of the history of the Conquest rests.

As it takes two generations to form a character, it may fully satisfy all inquiry by adding the biography of the author's father. The father began his adventures at seven years of age, by skulking in the bushes with his widowed mother, while Brandt and his Indians destroyed Cherry Valley, which was his birth-place. Many years afterward he hired out to this same Joseph Brandt, in Canada, to build an Indian council-house. During the time the building was going on he lived in the family of Brandt, and acted as his secretary, and was his companion in long journeys through the forest, and was the purchaser of one third of the Brandt home farm. He lived long afterward, traveled a great deal, and at last died at Rochester, an honest house-carpenter.

At the conclusion of the volume there has been added a supplementary chapter, which brings down the history of Mexico till the present moment, and shows the manner in which the Pinto Indians became masters of the city.

With the deepest sense of obligation for favors received from the press and the public, the author again presents himself before the same tribunal in a little improved costume.

PREFACE.

The custom of mingling together historical events with the incidents of travel, of amusement with instruction, is rather a Spanish than American practice; and in adopting it, I must crave the indulgence of those of my readers who read only for instruction, as well as of those who read only for amusement.

The evidence that I have adduced to prove that the yellow fever is not an American, but an African disease, imported in slave-ships, and periodically renewed from those cargoes of human rottenness and putrefaction, I hope will be duly considered.

The picture of inner convent life, and the inimitable gambling scene in the convent of San Francis, I have not dared to present on my own responsibility, nor even that of the old English black-letter edition of Friar Thomas, but I have reproduced it from the expurgated Spanish edition, which has passed the censors, and must therefore be considered official.

I have presumed to follow the great Las Casas, who called all the historians of the Conquest of Mexico liars; and though his labored refutation of their fictions has disappeared, yet, fortunately, the natural evidences of their untruth still remain. Having before me the surveys and the levels of our own engineers, I have presumed to doubt that water ever ran up hill, that navigable canals were ever fed by "back water," that pyramids

(*teocalli*) could rest on a foundation of soft earth, that a canal twelve feet broad by twelve feet deep, mostly below the water level, was ever dug by Indians with their rude implements, that gardens ever floated in mud, or that brigantines ever sailed in a salt marsh, or even that 100,000 men ever entered the mud-built city of Mexico by a narrow causeway in the morning, and after fighting all day returned by the same path at night to their camp, or that so large a besieging army as 150,000 men could be supported in a salt-marsh valley, surrounded by high mountains.

In answer to the question why such fables have so long passed for history, I have the ready answer, that the Inquisition controlled every printing-office in Spain and her colonies, and its censors took good care that nothing should be printed against the fair fame of so good a Christian as Cortéz, who had painted upon his banner an image of the Immaculate Virgin, and had bestowed upon her a large portion of his robbery; who had gratified the national taste for holy wars by writing one of the finest of Spanish romances of history; who had induced the Emperor to overlook his crime of levying war without a royal license by the bestowal of rich presents and rich provinces; so that, by the favor of the Emperor and the favor of the Inquisition, a *filibustero*, whose atrocities surpassed those of every other on record, has come down to us as a Christian hero.

The innumerable little things about their Indian mounds force the conviction on the experienced eye of an American traveler that the Aztecs were a horde of North American savages, who had precipitated themselves first upon the table-land, and afterward, like the

Goths from the table-lands of Spain, extended their conquests over the expiring civilization of the coast country; and this idea is confirmed by the fact that the magnificent Toltec monuments of a remote antiquity, discovered in the tropical forests, were apparently unknown to the Aztecs. The conquest of Mexico, like our conquest of California, was in itself a small affair; but both being immediately followed by extensive discoveries of the precious metals, Mexico rose as rapidly into opulence as San Francisco has in our day.

The evidence that I have presented of the inexhaustible supplies of silver in Northern Mexico, near the route of our proposed Pacific Railroad, may be interesting to legislators. These masses of silver lie as undisturbed by their present owners as did the Mexican discoveries of gold in California before the American conquest, from the inertness of the local population, and the want of facilities of communication with the city of Mexico.

The notion that the Mormons are destined to overrun Mexico is, of course, only an inference drawn from the exact parallel that exists between the circumstances under which this delusion has arisen and propagated itself and the history of Mohammedanism from its rise until it overran the degenerated Christians of the Eastern empire.

From want of space, I have been obliged to omit much valuable original matter procured for me by officers of government at the palace of Mexico, to whom, for the kind attention that I have upon all occasions received from them, I heartily return my most sincere thanks.

R. A. WILSON.

Rochester, Sebtember 1st, 1855.

THE VALLEY OF MEXICO, FROM THE AMERICAN OFFICIAL MAP

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MEXICO AND ITS RELIGION.

CHAPTER I.

Arrival at Vera Cruz.—Its appearance from the Steamer.—Getting Ashore.—Within the City.—Throwing Stones at an Image.—Antiquity of Vera Cruz.—Its Commerce.—The great Norther of 1852.—A little Steamer rides out the Tempest.—The Vomito, or Yellow Fever.—Ravages of the Vomito.—The Vomito brought from Africa in Slave-ships.—A curious old Book.—Our Monk arrives at Vera Cruz, and what befalls him there.—Life in a Convent.—A nice young Prior.—Our Monk finds himself in another World.

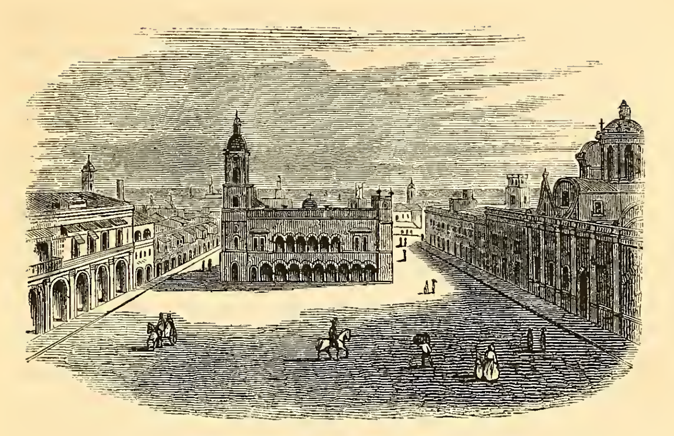
It was a stormy evening in the month of November, 1853, when the noble steamship *Texas* cast anchor in the open roadstead of Vera Cruz, under the lee of the low island on which stands the famous fortress of San Juan de Ulua. Hard by lay a British vessel ready to steam out into the teeth of the storm, as soon as the officers should receive from us a budget of newspapers. We were too late to obtain a permit to land that evening, so that we lay tossing at our anchors all night, and until the sun and the shore-boats appeared together on the morning following.

The finest view of Vera Cruz is from the harbor; and the best time to look upon it is when a bright sun, just risen above a watery horizon, is reflected back from the antiquated domes and houses, which are visible above the old massive city wall.

Soon we were in one of the canoes alongside, and

were quickly transported to the mole, on which we landed, among bales of cotton and bundles of freight that encumbered it. The iron gate of the city was now opened, and we passed through it, mixed up in the crowd of bare-footed "cargadores" or porters, who were carrying upon their backs bales of cotton, and depositing them in various piles in front of the custom-house. How quietly and quickly these cargadores do their work! and what great power of muscle they have acquired by long application at this laborious calling!

What a contrast does this city present to New Orleans, which we had left only four days before! Instead of the noise and bustle of a commercial emporium, all here is as quiet and as cleanly as a church-yard. Even the chiming of bells for the dying and the dead, which so incessantly disturbs the living by night and day in the season of the "vomito" or yellow fever, is no longer heard, for it is the healthy season — the season of "Northers." The only noise is the little bells upon the necks of the donkeys, that are carrying about kegs of water for family use. The chain-gang have completed their morning task of cleansing the streets and gutters, and as they are led away to their breakfast, a clank now and then of their chain reminds the traveler that crime has been as busy here as in more bustling cities. Morning mass is over, and bonnetless women of low and high degree are returning to their homes; some wearing mantillas of satin, black and shining as their raven hair, which are pinned by a jeweled pin upon the top of their heads; others, more modern in their tastes, sport India shawls; while the common class still cling to the "rebosa," which they so ingeniously twirl around their heads and chests as to include in its narrow folds their arms, and all above the waist except the face. Priests appear in black gowns, and fur hats with such



GOVERNMENT PALCE—VERA CRUZ.

ample brims that they lap and are fastened together upon the top of their heads. The armed patrol, in dirty cotton uniforms, and soldiers in broadcloth, are returning from morning muster; for in this hot climate the burden of the day's duties is discharged before breakfast. Under the arches (*portales*), and in the open market-place, men and women are driving a brisk trade, in the most quiet way, in meats, and vegetables, and huxter's wares. Nature has denied to the butcher of hot climates the privilege of salting meat, yet he makes amends for this defect by cutting his tough beef into strips, which he rubs over with salt, and offers to sell to you by the yard. Vera Cruz is now as venerable a looking town as when I was here before, although the houses, and the plastered walls, and tops of the stone churches seem to have had a new coating of Spanish white within a few months. But the malaria from the swamps in the time of the vomito, or the salt atmosphere driven upon it by the Northers, soon replaces the familiar dingy hue. The battered face of the stone image, at the side of the

deserted church, has received a few more bruises since I was last here; for the marriageable young misses still most religiously believe that a stone thrown by a fair hand that shall hit the image full in the face, will obtain for the thrower a husband, and an advantageous settlement for life. This is a small city, or the poor image could not have endured this kind of bruising for two hundred years.

The first Spaniard that landed here was Grijalva,* in 1518, in a trading expedition fitted out by Valasquez, Governor of Cuba. He was so successful in his traffic with the natives, as to obtain, in exchange for a few trinkets, $14,000 worth of gold dust. His success so encouraged Valasquez, that he fitted out a much larger expedition the following year, the command of which he gave to Hernando Cortéz, of whom we shall have occasion to speak more at large hereafter. Cortéz, at first, landed on the island of Ulua, in front of the site of the present city. But when he commenced his conquest he transported his boats to the mouth of the river Antigua, where he founded his intended city, a little way below the place where the national bridge now stands, and gave it the name of the Rich City of the True Cross (Villa Rica de Vera Cruz); and there it was where he destroyed his little vessels. Ninety years after the conquest of Mexico, the Marquis De Monterey removed the port back to Ulua, and founded the present city of Vera Cruz. It was at first built of wood, but having been several times burned down, it was at length built of its present material—a porous stone full of animal remains, obtained from the bottom of the harbor. This stone, when laid in and covered over with cement, forms a very durable building-material. The castle, which stands upon the island of Ulua, is now fast going to decay.

* Apuntes Historicos de Vera Cruz, p. 102.

As a fortification it is no longer of great value,* although it is computed that more than $16,000,000 was expended in its erection. In fact, its only present practical advantage is derived from the light-house which stands upon one of its towers.

This town, although it has been the terror of seafaring men for the last three hundred years, has, for a like period of time, enjoyed an enviable commerce. Nearly three-fourths of all the silver that has been shipped to Europe from America during that long period has been sent from this port, besides the other productions of the country, such as cochineal, vanilla, wood of Tobasco, sarsaparilla, and jalap. To all this we must add that all the trade of Spain with Japan, China, and the Philipine Islands, was carried across Mexico from Acapulco, on the Pacific, to be shipped from Vera Cruz to Spain. During the long period we have named, this was the only port on the Atlantic side where foreign commerce was allowed; and this was restricted to Spain alone, and to a single fleet of merchant ships that came and went annually, until about fifty years before the Mexican independence, when free commerce was allowed with all the Spanish world. From a history of the commerce of Vera Cruz, just published at Mexico, I find that its annual average did not vary greatly from $12,000,000 importations against $18,000,000 exportations. The extra $6,000,000 being about the annual average of the royal revenue derived from New Spain, as this country was then called. Silver constituted the bulk of this $18,000,000, both in weight and in value. During the last fifty years of Spanish dominion, this commerce, extended, as we have said, to all Spanish possessions, was monopolized by a

* Esterior Comercio de Mexico. M. M. Lerdo de Tegido. Mexico, 1853.

company of merchants styled the Consulado of Vera Cruz. Under the management of this company it averaged as high as $22,000,000. The revolution broke up this monopoly, and almost annihilated the commerce of this port, but it rapidly revived after the Spaniards were driven out of the castle, and from this time it has gone on increasing, until now it amounts to $26,000,000; the imports and exports being equal, as there is now no King's revenue. This commerce is now carried on principally with the United States, since the establishment of a line of steamers to New Orleans. The most important article of importation is raw cotton, for the supply of the great manufactories in the interior of Mexico. The silver goes principally to England, and is drawn against in favor of the cotton purchaser. There is also a large import trade in agricultural implements, steam-machinery for the sugar-mills and the silver mines, besides heavy importation of silks and wines from France and Spain. With this hasty notice we are compelled to quit a subject which is the theme of a most interesting volume.

The first time I saw Vera Cruz was during the great Norther of 1852. I was then returning homeward from the city of Mexico. A fierce Norther was blowing, and the harbor was filled with shipping that could not bear up against such a tornado. I stood among the anxious multitude, watching the symptoms of the rising storm. We looked intently at the heavens as they gathered blackness, and saw far off toward the horizon the clouds and the waves mingling together into one great vaporous mass. Now and then we were tantalized by brief intervals of bright skies; but they were again quickly overcast and shrouded in by more intense darkness, while the temperature fell to a degree of chilliness unusual in this latitude. The howling of the wind was

terrific. Where we stood we were near enough to see, or at least to catch glimpses of what was taking place on board the shipping. All extra anchors that could be got out were soon thrown into the sea. But to little purpose; for a coral bottom is but a poor holding-ground in a Norther. One after another the vessels began to drag toward the shore; and even the castle itself seemed at times as though it would be torn from its rocky foundations and dashed upon the town, so violent was the tempest. The terror of those on land was hardly describable as they saw the shipping dragging out on toward apparent destruction to both vessels and crews. Now and then a vessel held a little by some new obstacle that the anchor had caught hold of, but soon the resistance gave way, and then it moved on again, approaching the shore, whither all now were tending, except a few that occupied a good holding-ground in the lee of the castle and island. All did not drag at once, or drag together; but one by one their power of endurance gave out, and one by one they came dragging on, when they had no longer any help, and little hope, if the storm continued. "It can not last long," the spectators would mutter, rather in hope than expectation, for the only chance for the safety of the vessels was in the lulling of the tempest. Yet it did continue against the constant predictions of all, and momentarily increased in violence. Hope seemed to give way to despair as vessel after vessel approached the land; and as they were dashed into pieces men held their breath, while the hardy seamen were struggling in the waves toward the beach. One staunch vessel, without cargo, was carried broadside on, and her crew leaped out of her, and ran off in safety. Many single shipwrecks have caused greater destruction of property, and immensely greater loss of life; but here was the individual struggle of each

separate mariner, made in the very sight of those who could render no assistance, but must stand idle spectators. Here strong swimmers were rendered powerless by the tempest, and were perishing from exhaustion in vain efforts to swim ashore.

From this scene of disaster we turned to look back upon a more equal contest going on between two of the elements: a small steamer—a little crazy thing, it seemed, almost ready to be blown to pieces; but it was gallantly facing the tempest, and riding out bravely against the combined force of wind and waves;—she mounted the waves, one after another, without any difficulty, though held by but a single anchor, as the strain on her cable was eased away by the action of her paddle-wheels, which were kept in motion by an engine of the smallest class ever put into a river boat. This was said to be the most violent Norther that had visited Vera Cruz in a century. It destroyed sixteen vessels, and caused the loss of thirteen lives; and yet so small an amount of steam-power was fully able to bear up against the dreaded fury of a Norther, and to insure the safety of the vessel.

Vera Cruz, like almost every other Spanish American seaport town, has its traditional tales of the horrors committed by the buccaneers, or filibusters. The history of the buccaneers, their origin, their fearful exploits of blood, the terror that their name even now inspires in the minds of all Spanish Americans, are too well known to demand a repetition here, though we may give the substance of their story, by saying that they had their origin in a laudable effort to avenge the gross wrongs inflicted by the Spaniards upon the honest traders of other nations, while trafficking with the native inhabitants of America, within the region which the Pope, as the representative of the Almighty, had be-

stowed upon the King of Spain, to conquer and subdue for the benefit of the Church. Elizabeth of England raised the question of the validity of the title of the King of Spain derived from so questionable a source, and insisted that he had no rights in America beyond those acquired by discovery, followed up by possession. But the King of Spain was too good a Catholic to have his right called in question, and when a heretic ship was caught among the West Indies, the avarice of priests and officials, and their holy horror at the approach of heresy to these regions, were exhibited in their dealings with the cargo and the unhappy crew. The inhuman treatment that the Spaniards inflicted upon honest traders aroused men to reprisals; and all ships venturing into these seas went fully armed. Private war was the natural consequence of Spanish cruelty and injustice; and the superior prowess of the Dutch and English soon made sad havoc with the plunder which the Spaniards had wrung from the natives for a hundred years and more.

The filibusters finally degenerated into pirates and robbers, and the treasure ships ("galleons") of Spain, and the towns upon her American coasts, were the victims of their depredations. The fury of the buccaneers was mainly directed against the monks, and when they sacked a town, they never failed to pay an especial visitation to the convents. When Vera Cruz was sacked they showed their contempt for the clergy by compelling the monks and nuns to carry the plunder of the town to their pirate boats; thereby grieving these "holy men" most of all, if we may believe the old chronicles, because they could have no share in the rich plunder loaded upon their own backs.

The second day after our arrival in Vera Cruz a fellow-passenger, who had been sick all the voyage, died

of the yellow fever, which he had contracted at New Orleans, or on the Mississippi; which was probably the first time that a person ever died in Vera Cruz of vomito that had been contracted in the United States.

This is a fitting place to speak of this disease and of its ravages, which we witnessed before leaving New Orleans. It was the time for the frosts to make their appearance when I left New York, and with the expectation of seeing the ground covered with this antidote to the fever, crowds were returning from the north, though the marks of the pestilence were still visible along our route. It had followed the main stream of travel far northward, and now, as we ventured upon its track, it seemed like traversing the valley of the shadow of death. Terror had committed greater ravages than the pestilence; the villages and cities on our route were half deserted; stagnation was visible in all commercial places; and when we reached New Orleans this strange state of things was doubly intensified: it looked more like a city of the dead, or a city depopulated, than the emporium of the Mississippi valley. A stranger might have supposed that a great funeral service had just been performed, in which all of the inhabitants remaining in town had acted the part of mourners. The city itself had been so thoroughly cleansed, that it might challenge comparison with one of the most cleanly villages of Holland, while its footways seemed almost too pure to be trod upon. Nothing appears half so gloomy as such a place when deserted of its principal inhabitants.

This disease was unknown in America until the opening of the African slave-trade. It is an African disease, intensified and aggravated by the rottenness and filthy habits of the human cargoes that brought it to America. It was entirely unknown at Vera Cruz until brought

there in the slave-ship of 1699.* In like manner it was carried to all the West India islands. When the negro insurrection in San Domingo drove the white population into exile, the disease was carried by the immigrants to all the cities of the United States, and even to the most healthy localities in the interior of Massachusetts. Old people still remember when New York was so completely deserted that its principal streets were boarded up, and watchmen went their rounds of silent streets by day as well as by night. The fever of the present year can be traced directly to this accursed traffic. Slaves had been smuggled into Rio Janeiro, who brought the disease in its most virulent form from Africa. In that city it was carrying its hundreds to the grave, when a vessel cleared for New Orleans, having the disease on board. This vessel disseminated it in the upper wards of the city, while at the same time there arrived from Cuba another vessel which, from a like cause, had caught the vomito at Havana, and from this second vessel the disease was disseminated in the lower wards of New Orleans. It was the meeting of these two independent currents of the fever in the centre of the city, on Canal Street, that caused that fatal day on which three hundred victims went to their long homes. Such were the fruits of this offspring of an inhuman trade in a single city, in a single day.

I learn from the preface of a book in the Spanish language, which I purchased at Mexico, entitled "The Voyages of Thomas Page," that a Dominican monk of that name, the brother of the Royalist Governor of Oxford under Charles I., was smuggled into Mexico by his Dominican brethren, against the King's order, which prohibited the entry of Englishmen into that country. As a missionary monk he resided in Mexico, or New

* Apuntes Historicos de Vera Cruz, p. 129.

Spain, as it was then called, eighteen years. On his return to England he published an account of the country which he visited, under the title of "A Survey of the West Indies." This being the first and last book ever written by a resident of New Spain that had not been submitted to the most rigid censorship by the Inquisition, it produced so profound a sensation, that, by order of the great Colbert, French Minister of State, it was expurgated and translated into French by an Irish Catholic of the name of O'Neil. From this expurgated French edition the Spanish copy now before me was translated. From this Spanish edition I had made the several translations that are found in this, and the following chapters. I have since found a black letter copy of the original, printed at London, in 1677; but I have concluded to use the translations, as furnishing a more official character to the picture therein drawn of the grossly immoral state of the clergy, and of the religious orders. As it is from actual observation, and has the sanction of the censorship, it must be of more value to my readers than any account of personal observations that I might write. This is my apology for copying the most interesting portions of a long forgotten book.

"When we came to land," says our author, "we saw all the inhabitants of the city (Vera Cruz) had congregated in the Plaza (public square) to receive us. The communities of monks were also there, each one preceded by a large crucifix. The Dominicans, the San Franciscans, the Mercedarios, and the Jesuits, in order to conduct the Virey (the Viceroy) of Mexico as far as the Cathedral. The Jesuits and friars from the ships leaped upon the shore more expeditiously than did the Virey, the Marquis Seralvo, and his wife. Many of them (the monks) on stepping on shore kissed it, con-

sidering that it was a holy cause that brought them here—the conversion of the Indians, who had before adored and sacrificed to demons; others kneeled down and gave thanks to the Virgin Mary and other saints of their devotion, and then all the monks hastened to incorporate themselves with their respective orders in the place in which they severally stood. The procession, as soon as formed, directed itself to the Cathedral, where the consecrated wafer* was exposed upon the high altar, and to which all kneeled as they entered. . . . . . The services ended, the Virey was conducted to his lodgings by the first Alcalde, the magistrates of the town, and judges, who had descended from the capitol to receive him, besides the soldiers of the garrison and the ships. Those of the religious orders who had just arrived were conducted to their respective convents, crosses, as before, being carried at the head of each community. Friar John presented (us) his missionaries to the Prior of the Convent of San Domingo, who received us kindly, and directed sweetmeats to be given to us, and also there was given to each of us a cup of that Indian beverage which the Indians call chocolate.

"This first little act of kindness was only a prelude to a greater one. That is to say, it was the introduction to a sumptuous dinner, composed of flesh and fish of every description, in which there was no lack of turkeys and capons. All set out with the intent of manifesting to us the abundance of the country, and not for the purpose of worldly ostentation.

"The Prior of Vera Cruz was neither old nor severe, as the men selected to govern communities of youthful *religious* are accustomed to be. On the contrary, he was in the flower of his age, and had all the manner of

* Called, in the Spanish translation, "The most holy Sacrament;" but in the English original, "The bread God."

a joyful and diverting youth. His fathership, as they told us, had acquired the priory by means of a gift of a thousand ducats, which he had sent to the Father Provincial. After dinner he invited some of us to visit his cell, and there it was we came to know the levity of his life. It exhibited little of the appearance of a life of penance and self-mortification. We expected to find in the habitation of a prelate of such an establishment a most magnificent library, which would furnish an index of his learning and of his taste for letters. But we saw nothing more than a dozen old books lying in a corner, and covered with dust and cobwebs, as if they had hid themselves for shame at the neglect with which the treasures they contained had been treated, and that a guitar should be preferred to them.

"The cell of the Prior was richly tapestried and adorned with feathers of birds of Michoacan; the walls were hung with various pictures of merit; rich rugs of silk covered the tables; porcelain of China filled the cupboards and sideboards; and there were vases and bowls containing preserved fruits and most delicate sweetmeats. Our enthusiastic companions did not fail to be scandalized at such an exhibition, which they looked upon as a manifestation of worldly vanity, so foreign to the poverty of a begging friar. But those among us that had sailed from Spain with the intent of living at their ease, and of enjoying the pleasures which riches would produce, exulted at the sight of such great opulence, and they desired to establish themselves in a country where they could so quickly win fortunes so secure and abundant.* The holy Prior talked to us only of his ancestry, of his good parts, of the influence which he had with the Father Provincial, of the love

* These missionary monks were on their way to Manilla and the Spanish East Indies by the road across Mexico.

which the principal ladies and the wives of the richest merchants manifested to him, of his beautiful voice, of his consummate skill in music. In fact, that we might not doubt him in this last particular, he took the guitar and sung a sonnet which he had composed to a certain *Amaryllis*. This was a new scandal to our newly-arrived *religious*, which afflicted some of them to see such libertinage in a prelate, who ought, on the contrary, to have set an example of penance and self-mortification, and should shine like a mirror in his conduct and words.

"When we had satiated our ears with the delicacy of music, our eyes with the beauty of such rich stuffs of cotton, of silk, and of feathers, then our reverend Prior directed us to take from his dispensaries a prodigious quantity of every species of dainties to allure the taste or satisfy the appetite. Truly we seemed in another world, by being transported from Europe to America. Our senses had been changed from what they had been the night and day before, while listening to the hoarse sounds of the mariners, when the abyss of the sea was at our feet, and when we drank fetid water, and inhaled the stench of pitch. In the Prior's cell of the Convent of Vera Cruz, we listened to a melodious voice accompanied with an harmonious instrument, we saw treasures and riches, we ate exquisite confectioneries, we breathed amber and musk, with which he had perfumed his sirups and conserves. O, that delicious Prior!"

CHAPTER II.

An historical Sketch.—Truth seldom spoken of Santa Anna.—Santa Anna's early Life.—Causes of the Revolution.—The Virgin Mary's Approval of King Ferdinand.—The Inquisition imprisons the Vice-King.—Santa Anna enters the King's Army.—The plan of Iguala.—The War of the two Virgins.—Santa Anna pronounces for Independence.

Before commencing our journey to the interior, we must break the thread of our narrative by a brief biographical sketch: for this town is the birth-place, and here began the public career of that man whose life has become the history of his country. With him the Mexican Republic began, and with him it has been terminated. In 1822 he was first to proclaim a Republic in the Plaza of Vera Cruz; and when I stood in the Plaza of the city of Mexico, in the winter of 1854, I heard him proclaimed absolute ruler of a state which had already ceased to be a Republic. This was not the first time that he had been raised to absolute authority in Mexico, but the third time that this had occurred in his checkered career—a career that resembles more the vicissitudes in the life of a hero of Spanish romance than the memoirs of a living politician.

Santa Anna is a man of whom the truth has seldom been spoken; for no man can raise himself from a humble position to be the embodiment of all the powers of the state without creating a host of enemies; nor can a man be long in possession of absolute authority without raising up a tribe of flatterers. To the one, he is every thing that is shocking to humanity; while to the

other he is the perfection of all the moral qualities. This scurrilous manner in which all political discussions are carried on in Mexico, has always furnished a ready apology for the suppression of liberty of speech, and for the enforcement of the Mexican law of ostracism in turn by every party in power.

As we Americans have nothing to hope from his friendship, and nothing to fear from the displeasure of Santa Anna, we are able to take a correct view of his character from the records, and to affirm that he is neither a saint, as represented by one party, nor a monster, as represented by the other; and as greatness is a comparative term, and goodness is often used in a comparative sense, we may also add that he is the first of Mexican statesmen, and as good as the best of his rivals. He has suffered unnumbered and overwhelming defeats, which have so exhibited his recuperative talents as to attract the admiration of foreigners. Other aspirants have risen to popular favor, and then fallen, one after the other, and have disappeared. But Santa Anna's falls have ever been a prelude to his rising again to a greater elevation; and there is no point of elevation to which he has risen from which he has not been ignominiously hurled. He is a politician whose course reminds us of a skillful swimmer in the breakers; half the time he rides the waves and half the time he is submerged, yet never sinks so deep but that he rises again to the surface. When Santa Anna is in authority the fickle multitude cry out against him, and when he is in exile no suffering innocent can compare with him; and the books that at such times sell best in Mexico are those that vindicate his past career. Of such a man something must be said, and to render that something intelligible, a brief account of the social and political changes of his times must be rendered.

Santa Anna was born at Vera Cruz, in the year 1796, in the most prosperous era of the colonial government of the vice-kingdom of New Spain, while Ravillagigedo was Virey. The new and liberal code, regulating mines and mining, was yielding its legitimate fruits in the immensely increased production of silver and gold, while the newly-granted privilege of unrestricted trade with Spain and her other colonies was followed by considerable shipments of grain from the table-lands of Mexico to the West India Islands. The profound peace that had reigned uninterruptedly for two hundred and seventy-five years was still unbroken. Not a word of disloyalty was breathed; while the Inquisition of Mexico watched with the utmost care for the least appearance of rebellion against God or the king. Such was the religious and political stagnation at the time Santa Anna was born; and so it continued for the first twelve years of his life. But his youth was not to be passed in a period of national repose.

It was the year 1808 that the news arrived in Mexico of the imprisonment of Charles IV. and Ferdinand VII., the dotard and simpleton who then disputed the Spanish throne, and who had rendered themselves the laughing stock of all Europe by going, each one in person, to advocate his side of a family quarrel before a common enemy, the French Emperor, by whom both had thus been caught like mice in a cage, and compelled to abdicate. At this news a feeling of indignation ran through the vice-kingdom, while all Europe laughed at the strange combination of knave and fool exhibited in the characters of the two Spanish kings. The people of New Spain saw in them only the guardians of the Church in the power of the infidels, and at once forgot the unnatural crimes of their two kings. They thought only of their piety, and with joy the news was carried

throughout New Spain, that one of their previous kings had consecrated his imprisonment to embroidering a petticoat for the Virgin Mary; and when this announcement was followed by another, a little more apocryphal, that the most holy image had, by a nod, signified her acceptance of the present, there could no longer be a doubt of his title of Most Catholic King, which might from that time onward be interpreted Most Catholic Mantua-maker. The world might now laugh at him, and hold him up to ridicule. All its ridicule mattered nothing to the Mexicans. It made no difference to them. To revere the king and render him a blind obedience was at all times a part of their religion. Whether either of the two were fit to be kings was not a question for the people to determine; and if the Virgin Mary had not nodded her approval, the solution of this question of competency would still be reserved for the tribunals of God and the Inquisition. It was sufficient for the people to know that both father and son had been compelled to abdicate, and that they no longer were kings of Spain, and that the brother of the French Emperor occupied the vacant throne, which the Inquisition had associated, in their superstition, with the throne of God itself. God and the king were inseparable words in the mouth of a citizen of New Spain, and he that dared to separate them was thought worthy of Inquisitorial fires. They avowed the same reverence which the Aztecs rendered to their emperor before the conquest.

Next to God and the king was the vice-king. Yet they had seen their beloved viceroy, Iturrigaray, deposed by a conspiracy of Spanish shop-keepers, which had organized itself in that focus of Mexican trade, the Parian. All this was bewildering to the nation. All New Spain was astonished to see a power sufficiently potent to arrest the vice-king emanate from such a

quarter. And not only had they witnessed this, but they had also seen this same officer, whose person was so sacred in their eyes, cast into the prison of the Inquisition among "heretics, and accursed of God, and despised of Christian men," because he had not discriminated in favor of the Spanish-born in his appeal to the patriotism of the people.

Before they had escaped from this bewildering of all their ideas of government, they were suddenly called upon to take sides in a war of races that had sprung up in determining the question, who constituted the people, among the divers races that composed the population of Mexico? The Cortes of Spain had just proclaimed the sovereignty of the people. But who were the people? The solution of this question excited one of the most cruel and envenomed wars on record. The handful of whites who had been born in Spain, and who enjoyed a monopoly of the lucrative offices in Church and in State, as well as a monopoly in trade, claimed it as their exclusive privilege to be considered the people, and they it was who imprisoned the vice-king, because he appeared to have more enlarged views than themselves. The Creoles, as those of pure white blood born in America are called, who were excluded from all places of honor or profit, held the balance of power, and it was doubtful for a long time to which side the Creole soldiers would incline. But they were not long in suspense; for when fired upon by an undisciplined rabble, rather than an army, of Indians, they returned the fire, and there, in sight of the city of Mexico, settled the character of a contest which was, from that time forward, to shake the whole social organization of the vice-kingdom—in which plantations were destroyed, and villages and cities sacked and burned, and the most unheard-of cruelties practiced by one party or the other

on the defenseless, until the final triumph of the Creole, or white troops, in the time of the viceroy, Apaduca, over the insurgents, composed chiefly of Indians and those of mixed blood.

While this war was raging in all its fury, Santa Anna arrived at an age to choose an occupation for life; and with the ardor of youth he entered the king's service as a Creole officer, a cadet in the *Fijo de Vera Cruz*. In this fratricidal war he soon distinguished himself by that activity in the performance of the duties of a subaltern which, in more mature years, distinguished him as a leader and a politician. He was at that time in the unhappy dilemma of every man born in Spanish America; he was compelled to choose between two evils —either to join the king's cause, and fight for the Spaniards who oppressed his country, or to run the hazard of seeing re-enacted in Mexico the bloody tragedy of San Domingo, if the colored races should conquer in a contest with the Spaniards. A few Creoles had chosen the side of the insurgents; but they were few; as the Spanish cause could not have been sustained for a day, if it had not been for the want of confidence in the leaders of the insurrection. But it was not in contests with his own countrymen that Santa Anna first won distinction; it was in a battle with the filibustering invaders while yet Mexico was a colony of Spain: it was in the bloody battle of the river Madina, in Texas, where an army of three thousand men (according to Mexican accounts), on their way to join the Mexican insurgents, were totally routed by Aridondo.

The zeal which Santa Anna continually exhibited in almost daily contests with guerillas outside of the walls of Vera Cruz, so long as the contest was confined to a war of races, soon won him distinction. But now he is called to play the part of a military politician; for

when the news arrived in Mexico of the new constitutional revolution of 1820 in Spain itself, all the higher classes of society in the vice-kingdom were in terror. Ten years of bloodshed and civil disorder had been the fruits to Mexico of the first revolution of Spain—an insurrection that had not been effectually put down until Spain herself had returned to despotism, and now the newly-restored peace was threatened with a more bloody insurrection than the former, unless there was an entire separation of the two countries. Experience had fully demonstrated that the Spanish colonial system was compatible only with Spanish despotism. All native-born races desired to be free from the political disorders consequent upon the military revolutions of Spain herself. In this desire they were joined by that class who then ruled over the consciences of all men in Mexico, the clergy; for that powerful body preferred to sacrifice the allegiance they owed to the king, from whom they had received their preferments, rather than run the risk of losing their privileges.

That which was the thought of all Mexicans capable of thinking, was not long in receiving a definite shape and form. The *pronunciamiento* of Colonel Iturbide, at the city of Iguala, on the 24th of February 1821, united all the conflicting elements of Mexican society; for all could agree upon a plan that proposed a separation from Spain, while it gave guarantees to property, to the army, and to the church. Men who had been educated under the fatherly care of the Inquisition, had no idea of religious toleration; toleration for heresy was no part of their creed; nor had their long civil wars produced that alienation from the priesthood which had arisen from this cause in the other Spanish American states. One reason for this was that the first insurrection was headed by the parish priest, Hidalgo; and be-

cause the most prominent leaders in it were priests; while the watchword of the insurgents was, "*Viva* Our Lady of Guadalupe!" who is the patron saint of the colored races of Mexico. The insurrection of Iguala was entirely distinct in its character from the popular insurrection of 1810; for that was an insurrection of the oppressed races against the despotism that was grinding them in the dust. It was a peasant war; but the cry of Iguala rose from the soldiers of the government. It was the first of that long list of military insurrections that have afflicted Mexico. It was an insurrection of the Creole supporters of the government, and rendered the government powerless at once. Colonel Iturbide had distinguished himself, as a Creole soldier, by his courage, and by the cruelty which he exercised toward the first insurgents.

When an officer in the service of the king in the first insurrection obtained a victory, he went to make his offering, not at the shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe, but at the shrine of the Virgin of Remedies, so that as long as the Spanish cause prospered, the shrine of Guadalupe remained in obscurity; but as soon, however, as Iturbide and the Creoles deserted the cause of the king and joined the national standard, the Lady of Guadalupe was made the national patroness, and the order of Guadalupe was established as the first and only order of the empire, while Our Lady of Remedies sank into obscurity. This gave occasion to an unbelieving Mexican to remark that the revolution was a war between the Blessed Virgins, and that she of Guadalupe had triumphed over her that had taken shelter in the maguey.

As soon as the tidings of the plan of Iguala reached Vera Cruz, Santa Anna hastened to give in his adhesion to the cause now truly national, which guaranteed equal rights to all under the united leadership of

Iturbide and of General Guerrero, the only remaining Creole leader of the first insurrection still in arms. On the 18th day of March, 1821, he was the first to proclaim the plan of Iguala in the Plaza of Vera Cruz. This promptness of Santa Anna in proclaiming the independence determined many who were hesitating in dread of a bombardment from Spanish forces in the Castle of San Juan de Ulua; and this important step it was which first brought him prominently into notice. As a consequence of this political movement, Santa Anna was appointed second in command in Vera Cruz.

CHAPTER III.

Incidents of Travel.—The Great Road to the Interior.—Mexican Diligences.—The Priest was the first Passenger robbed.—The National Bridge.—A Conducta of Silver.—Our Monk visits Old Vera Cruz.—They grant to the Indians Forty Years of Indulgence in return for their Hospitality.—The Artist among Robbers.—Mexican Scholars in the United States.—Encerro.

A RAILROAD eleven miles in length, crossing the morass, connects Vera Cruz with the great National Road to the table-land of the interior. The coach in which the journey to Mexico is made is placed on a railroad track and pushed on before a crazy locomotive, while behind the engine is a long line of freight wagons. At every cow-path that crossed our track stood a flagman waving his little red flag to the train as it passed, apparently in burlesque imitation of a regular road.

The famous National Bridge carries the National Road over the river Antigua, at the mouth of which, a little way below, Cortez built his Vera Cruz (Villa Rica de Vera Cruz), and where he caused his vessels to be sunk before commencing his expedition to the interior. Little has ever been known in our country of that magnificent whole, of which this and other bridges of solid masonry are but parts. The National Road of Mexico was conceived and executed by a company of merchants known as the Consulado of Vera Cruz. It is about ninety miles in length, and cost $3,000,000. From Vera Cruz it runs northward, often within sight of the Gulf, till it nearly reaches the Cerro Gordo, where it turns inland, and passing upward through that celebrated

gorge to Jalapa, a distance of sixty miles from Vera Cruz, and at an elevation of 4264 feet above the sea; thence, for the remaining thirty miles, it is carried over the famous mountain, Perote, to the great table-land of Mexico. It is a work of extraordinary character for the period in which it was built, and the method of its construction; and reminds the traveler of a Roman road of antiquity, though no Roman road ever passed over a mountain 10,000 feet in height. The ruin into which it has fallen in many places during the last thirty years of civil war, serves to keep up the illusion, though it falls far short of those ancient roads in the material of which it is constructed, being of small rough stones, covered over with a durable cement.

The system of stage-coaches between Vera Cruz and Mexico is as nearly perfect as any system of traveling dependent on weather can be. Comfortable hotels are established at convenient distances along the road; and if the passenger desires it, he can have endorsed upon his ticket a permission to tarry upon the road as long as he may desire. Six, and sometimes eight horses drag the coach along at a hazardous speed. Twice, out of three times that I have passed over this road, I have been overturned. Once, while riding on the top, a heavy iron axle broke like a pipe-stem, throwing me off upon the rough stones, with the additional misfortune of having a heavy Frenchman fall upon me. But no bones were broken, and I still live to tell the story.

The neighborhood of the National Bridge is a favorite haunt of the knights of the road. Though very pious in their way, they have no scruples in relieving any priest who may fall into their hands of such worldly possessions as he happens to have about him. In fact, they seem to take a special delight in plundering these holy men, giving them the precedence in relieving their

NATIONAL BRIDGE—ROBBING A COACH.

wants. Out of respect to the cloth, they omit the ceremony of searching, to which the other passengers are subjected; nor do they compel him to lie down like the others. But with mock solemnity a robber approaches the sacred personage, and dropping on one knee, presents his hat for alms, which the priest understands to be a reverential mode of demanding all the valuables that he carries about him: his reverence having been disposed of, the women are searched; afterward the men, one by one, are ordered to rise up to undergo a like ceremony; and, lastly, the baggage is ransacked, and then all are suffered to go on their way in peace, if no shots have been fired from the stage. In former times the robbers used to divide their plunder with the Virgin Mary, but now things are altered; the robber takes all, and even visits the churches occasionally, not to worship, but for plunder. If two or three priests take passage in a single coach, people shake their heads and say, "That coach will certainly be robbed;" and so it often happens.

The stage ordinarily passes this bridge in the night, when there is no opportunity to look at the magnificent scenery around. I saw it once by daylight; and long shall I remember the impression produced. I lingered about the spot to the last moment that "Jim," or as he is here called "San Diego," the driver, would permit. We reluctantly took our places in the coach, and when the hostler let slip the rope that held the heads of the leaders, our eight wild horses dashed off at a furious rate over a roughly paved road, to the no small disturbance of the reflections which such a spot awakens.

We tried to think of the stirring events that had here so often taken place in times of civil war, when Gomez practiced such cruelties in the name of liberty; when robberies and murders were committed here in

broad daylight; when the frowning battery that crowns the cliff, stopped the passage of armies. But it was of no use to try to think; the wheels would strike fire upon the boulders lying in the road, tumbling us about until all romance and recollection were pounded out of us.

Gladly we halted at Plan del Rio to take a little chocolate and look at the ruins of a stone bridge blown up by gunpowder, while new horses were being brought out to drag us up the Cerro Gordo pass.

Here we met a small body of soldiers conducting eight freight wagons that carried loads of coined silver, and were drawn by twelve horses each, on their way to the coast—a common sight to the people of these parts, as was evident from the indifference with which they regarded such cargoes of money; yet it was calculated to make an American stare, though he had been accustomed to look on the treasures of California in her palmiest days. But a few millions in silver make a most imposing show.

Our monk, on his journey to this point, had kept along the shore, crossing the Antigua near its mouth, visiting old Vera Cruz. He thus describes what he there saw:

"The first Indians whom we encountered in our journey were at old Vera Cruz, which is on the sea-shore, where, as we have already said, the Spaniards first designed to establish themselves on undertaking the conquest of the country, but which they had to abandon on account of the little protection it afforded against the north winds. Here we began to note the power which the clergy and friars have among the poor Indians; how they rule them, and the respect and veneration which are paid them. The Prior of Vera Cruz having written, the morning of our departure, advertising them of the

day of our arrival, he commanded them to come and receive us, and to serve us during our transit through their territory. The poor Indians obeyed with the greatest promptitude the orders of the Prior, and at a league from their village twenty of their principal men encountered us upon horseback, and handed a wreath of flowers to each one of us. Then they set out on their return in front of our caravan, and at a bow-shot distance, and in this manner we proceeded until we came up with others on foot, with trumpets and flutes, which were played very agreeably before our whole cavalcade. Those who had come out were the employees of the churches and the chiefs of the fraternities, all of whom presented us a garland of flowers. Then followed others—the priests' assistants, acolitos, and the young people of the choir, who went singing a *Te Deum laudamus*, until we arrived at the market-place. There is always a Plaza in the midst of the village, and here it was adorned by two great and most beautiful elms: between these there had been constructed an immense arbor, in which was a table covered with jars and dishes of conserves, and other kinds of sweetmeats and biscuits for eating with the chocolate. While they were preparing the chocolate, heating the water, and adding the sugar, the principal Indians and the authorities of the village came and knelt down, and kissed our hands, and gave us their address, saying that our arrival was a happy event for their country, and that they gave us a thousand thanks because we had left our native country, our parents, and our firesides, in order to go to regions so remote to labor for the salvation of souls; and that they honored us as gods upon earth, and as the apostles of Jesus Christ; and they said so many, many things, that only the chocolate put an end to their eloquence. We remained an hour, and manifested our gratification

for the demonstration of affection and bounty with which they had favored us, assuring them that there was not any thing in the world more dear to us than their salvation, and that to procure it we had not feared to expose ourselves to all the perils with which we were threatened by sea and land; nor even the barbarous cruelty of other Indians who did not know the true God, in whose service we had resolved to sacrifice even life.

"With this we departed from them, making gifts to the chiefs of rosaries, medals, little metal crosses, 'the Lamb of God' (*Agnus Dei*), relics which we brought from Spain; and we conceded to each one forty years of indulgence, in virtue of the powers which we had received from the Pope for distributing them, where, when, and to whom we pleased. On our going out from the shade of the arbor for mounting our mules, we saw the market-place full of men and women on their knees, almost adoring us, and asking us to give them our blessing. We raised the hand on passing, and gave it to them by making the sign of the cross. The submission of the poor Indians, and the vanity excited by a reception so ceremonious, and with such public homage, turned the heads of our young friars, who began to believe themselves superior to the bishops of Europe; and even our illustrious superiors were not far from pride, but exhibited excessive haughtiness, now that they had seen their vanity flattered with such great acclamations in their sight as were lavished upon us that day, although we were only some simple friars. The flutes and the trumpets began to resound again at the head of our procession, and the chiefs of the people accompanied us as far as half a league, and afterward they retired to their homes."

Slowly has the stage been moving up the pass. The

rattle of the wheels has ceased, the sun has made his appearance, and the awakened passengers are disposed to listen to tales of wild adventures. The loquacious are ready with an abundant supply. The best of these is the tale of "The Artist among the Robbers."

"Four years ago," began the artist who made some sketches for this work, "while I was making a pedestrian journey over this road, I seated myself, weak and hungry, upon a stone by the roadside, not a little tired of life and evil fortune. The remains of the yellow fever were still upon me, and only a single dollar burdened my pocket; for I did not learn, until too late, how poor a place for an artist from abroad is this country, where the San Carlos is creating the native article by scores. I had not sat long in my gloomy mood before I had company enough; for as I looked up I saw, trooping down the side of the hill, a band of men, who I thought would soon put an end to my troubles. I took the thing coolly, for I cared little for the result; and had I cared, there was no helping it now. So I patiently waited their arrival. To the questions of the only one who could talk English I answered briefly, as I supposed they would soon end my troubles. When I told him that I cared little if he did kill me, the whole party laughed uproariously. The leader now came up, and having searched me, found my story to be true. I then drew an outline of a picture with my pencil, and gave it to him. This so pleased him that he wrote me a memorandum, and with verbal directions as to the way I was to go if I wished for lodgings for the night, he bade me adieu, and the party disappeared up the side of the woody hill, and I set out on my journey."

The leagues were very long, but the landmarks were unmistakable; and without difficulty the artist reached the house and presented his paper to the old

woman that appeared at the door. This paper procured him a good supper, and comfortable quarters for the night; for his fine open countenance and yellow hair seemed to have touched the heart of this old Mexican matron—a class of persons, by-the-way, who are the kindest mortals in the world. The good cheer disposed of, he gathered up his feet upon his mat for the night, and slept as men do who have nothing to fear from robbers. When in the morning he awoke, he found the old dame astir, preparing for him an early breakfast, which was of a quality unexpected in so unpretending a mansion. When breakfast was prepared, and after he had finished eating it, the old woman made him understand by signs that he was to go into the adjoining room and there replenish his dilapidated wardrobe. She supplied him with a new suit from head to heel, and then urged him to tie around his waist a small sheep's entrail filled with brandy, according to the custom of Mexican Indians. Thus had our transient friend had his inner and outer man supplied in this out-of-the-way hut, at the robbers' charges, after which, being shown the direction in which to reach the Jalapa road, he bade the kind old matron *adios*, and traveled on to Encerro with a lighter heart than he had borne the day before.

At Encerro we left four of our fellow-passengers. They were the son and three daughters of the widow who kept the inn. They had been through a full course of studies in one of the Roman Catholic boarding-schools in the United States, and were now returned, having fully mastered the English language—the great desideratum of the Spanish-American people, and one of the sources from which the Catholic schools and colleges in the United States derive their support.

What a beautiful spot is Encerro, the country residence of Santa Anna! It may not be as productive as

his estate of Manga de Clavo, in the hot country, near Vera Cruz; but it is more salubrious and delightful. In the civil wars he had often made a stand here, and had learned to appreciate the beauty of the spot long before he was rich enough to make the purchase—for the pay received by officers of the highest rank in Mexico, is not sufficient to enable them to accumulate a fortune till far advanced in life. Politicians in Mexico, as in all other countries, are not unwilling to hazard their private fortunes in their political contests, and though the estates of the unsuccessful parties are not confiscated in a revolution, one reason may be that they are not ordinarily of great value.

The stage-coach has been forgotten in story-telling while slowly climbing up the pass, but as soon as we had overcome this impediment we started off again upon an unrepaired road, at our former neck-breaking speed, which we kept up until we reached Encerro, where for a little way we had an earthen road. Yet it was only a short breathing before we were upon the rough stones again. We had been gradually passing through different strata of atmosphere in our journey upward, the changes in the character of the vegetation kept pace with the change of the climate.

"Whose is that estate inclosed by such an antiquated looking stone wall?" I inquired, of a fellow-traveler.

"That belongs to Don Isidoro; and it extends some thirty leagues," was the reply. "You see that ridge of hills. That is its northern boundary. This wall separates it from the estate of Santa Anna. In fact it is surrounded by a continuous and substantial stone-wall, sufficient to keep in cattle. This spot of land sufficiently large for a county, with a soil the richest in the world, and a climate like that of Jalapa, is given up to be a range for thousands of cattle."

We must hasten to our journey's end, which, for the present, is Jalapa. While here, we can sum up the story of our eighteen hours' ride. From Vera Cruz we passed through a tropical marsh, presenting a striking contrast to what we had witnessed about that town. In place of being surrounded by hot, shifting hillocks of sand, we were in the midst of tropical vegetation. Trees not only bore their own natural burdens, but were borne down with creepers, vines, and parasitic plants; forming one strange mass of foliage of very many distinct kinds matted together and mingled into one. Plantations of vanilla, of coffee, of cocoa, or of sugar-cane, nowhere approached our road; nor were the cocoa-nut, the banana, and the plantain, so familiar in all tropical climates, often visible. Upon the whole route there were little evidences of labor, except those furnished by the road itself. It was all wilderness. Yet the graceful features of the creepers, hanging from branch to branch of the sycamores, and the shady arbors formed by their dense foliage, looked as though a gardener's hand could be traced in so much regularity; yet it was only Nature's own gardening, where the wild birds might build their nests, and breed, and sing without fear of disturbance. How often have I dismounted, while riding along such a forest, by the side of some running brook, and while my horse was feeding I have almost fallen asleep under the soothing influence which such an atmosphere produces upon a traveler, heated by fast riding under a vertical sun. It is one of those happy sensations that can not well be described, nor can it be appreciated by those who have not experienced it. Poets have exhausted their power in painting the beauties of scenes where all the senses are satiated with enjoyment. Yet this voluptuous gratification is soon alloyed by the evils that remind us that Paradise is not

to be found upon this earth. Here is seen the whole animal kingdom busily laboring for the destruction of its kind. Reptiles prey upon each other; parasitic plants fix themselves upon trees and suck up the sap of their existence; and man, while he enjoys to a surfeit these bounties of nature, must watch narrowly against the venom and the poison that comes to mar his pleasure, and teach him the wholesome lesson that true happiness is only found in Heaven. We are now at our journey's end.

CHAPTER IV.

Jalapa.—The extraordinary Beauty and Fertility of this Spot.—Jalap, Sarsaparilla, Myrtle, Vanilla, Cochineal, and Wood of Tobasco.—The charming Situation of Jalapa.—Its Flowers and its Fruits.—Magnificent Views.—The tradition that Jalapa was Paradise.—A speck of War.—The Marriage of a Heretic.—A gambling Scene in a Convent.

BYRON'S lines, in the opening of "*The Bride of Abydos*," are gorgeous enough:

"Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppress'd with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gull in their bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute."

But the poet would have given them a still more luxuriant coloring had he ever ascended the table-land of the tropics, and visited Jalapa, the spot which the natives insist was the site of the original Paradise. Paradise, Jalapa, and myrtle, sound well enough together, and do not clash with the native tradition in relation to this delightful spot.

We were now more than four thousand feet above the sea, on an extensive plateau, half-way up the mountain. The beautiful *convolvulus jalapa* does not flourish here, but is brought from the Indian villages of Colipa and Maqautla, situated in the valleys that run among the hills. The *myrtle*, whose grain is the spice of Tobasco, is produced in the forests by the river Boriderus; the *smilax*, whose root is the true sarsaparilla, grows deep down in the humid and umbra-



JALAPA.

geous ravines of the Cordilleras; and cocoa comes from Acayucan. From the ever-green forests of Papantla and Nautla comes the *epidendrum vanilla*, whose odoriferous fruit is used as a perfume. Thus these characteristic productions of the country come from the mysterious valleys of the neighboring mountain, where, nearly a thousand years before any of the present generation was born, flourished an unknown race of men as civilized as were the people of Palmyra or of Egypt, as vast ruins in the forests of Misantla and Papantla clearly indicate: a race as unknown to the degenerate Indians, who now wander about the ruined edifices and isolated pyramids of these cities, lost in the forest, as they are to us. A thousand years have passed away—their history has perished forever. The old books say that the delicate little scarlet insect, cochineal, was once a product of this district, and Jalapa was its proper market, and the mart of all the other peculiar productions of the neighboring region, because it was the town on the high land nearest to the sea-port.

Jalapa early became an important position to which foreign goods were brought to be exchanged for silver and gold, jalap, sarsaparilla, vanilla, spice of Tobasco, cocoa, cochineal, and woods of various colors.

It is the beauty of the place itself, and the unsurpassed magnificence of its mountain-scenery, that throws such a charm around Jalapa. The transparency of its atmosphere makes the snow-crowned Orizaba and Perote, in the coast range of mountains, appear close at hand, with their dense forests of perpetual foliage, moistened incessantly by the clouds driven upon them from the ocean. High up in the region of perpetual moisture, Jalapa has a soil intensely luxuriant, and is beyond the reach of those parasitic plants of the low lands, that fix themselves upon other plants and trees, and eat out

their very life, as the malarias do that of the human being. Roses of the most choice varieties grow spontaneously by the roadside, or creep over the walls. Nature, the parent of architects, has here shaped all her trees upon the most exquisite models. The very twig planted in a hedge, if left to itself, grows up into a tree which gracefully inclines its head like a weeping willow; while a mammoth white bell, or trumpet flower, hangs pendent from the extremity of every limb, each flower larger and more beautiful than our favorite house lily, and giving forth a richer odor than the rose. From the exquisite delicacy and richness of the fruit which this plant (the chirimoya) bears, and the danger arising from eating of it too freely, it is not unfrequently called the tree of the forbidden fruit; sometimes also it is called the custard plant.

Among the pleasing sights which we beheld was an orange orchard, in which I did not see a single tree that was not delicately and gracefully formed. In this profusion of nature I saw our own favorite flowers. A tiny crimson rose was creeping about in every place, while the large pink rose, which grows so rank, was clinging to an old wall and in full blossom; and many other varieties of crimson, white, yellow, and scarlet roses grow here without care; the morning-glory and honey-suckle are wild flowers here; the sweet-william, the lady-slipper, and all the flowers that we cultivate in summer, appear here to be spontaneous productions of nature. Even that sweetest and most beautiful of flowers, the passion-flower, with its mystical cross and five protruding seeds, was running over a frame, and yielding a profusion of blossoms, and a fruit—the granada—which almost equals in richness and delicacy the fruit of the chirimoya. But all the natural wonders of this town are not yet enumerated; for the fruits as well as the

flowers of every climate flourish in Jalapa. There are strawberries, of the largest size, growing beside a coffee-tree, the tree being filled with coffee-berries. Peach-trees were in full blossom in November, beside apricots and chirimoyas, while potatoes flourish among the bulbous productions of a tropical climate. The people of the town take a pride in its natural beauty; and there are no filthy alleys, no squalid poverty, or uncleanly hovels. Every house appears to be of stone; the walls neatly whitewashed, and bordered with pink, red, blue, green, or yellow; and the streets are fashioned to suit the grounds, without regard to checker-board regularity.

I stood in an upper story of the house of a Mr. Todd, on the opposite side of the little stream that runs in front of the town, and looked out from that favored position. The sun had just escaped from the folds of an imprisoning cloud, and was shining full upon the beautiful town and hill. The unabsorbed moisture on the leaves gave them an additional lustre. The green peering up every where amidst the whitened walls; the graceful form of the trees, where their outline could be traced; the curiously shaped roofs of the old stone churches, with buttresses and towers; the college of San Francisco, a curiously fashioned pile of buildings, standing out above all others; the hill behind the town, the lofty mountain of Perote, on its left flank, on whose top the sky seemed to rest—all combined to give credibility to that which has been said of the beauty of Jalapa by an old Spanish author—that Jalapa was "a piece of heaven let down to earth." This figure was afterward applied to Naples, and the remark was added—"See Naples, and die." But the Jalapanos say, "See Jalapa, and pray for immortality, that you may enjoy it forever." It is the boast of the Indian, that "Jalapa is Paradise."

One is almost tempted to agree with them; for here grow all plants that are pleasant to the eye, or good for food. Adam and Eve were not placed in the garden to plant and to sow, but to prune and dress the plants that grew of themselves. Here grow an abundance of broad-leaved plants, and for thread there is the fibre of the *maguey*, or century plant; while the thorns of the cactus are the needles used among the natives; so that all the materials were at ready hand for making their garments, as soon as our first parents had their eyes opened—by taking Jalap, I suppose—and so discovering that they were naked. It is a curious conceit, that the sin of Adam, in introducing a parasite into Eden, entailed a curse on this medicinal plant, which from that day, the story goes, has for very shame hid its face by day, and only by night opened its pretty scarlet flowers, which close again as the morning light appears.

In favor of the notion that Jalapa was the ancient Paradise, the argument is, that Paradise must have been in the tropics, in a region elevated far above the baleful heat and malaria of the low lands, in a climate where plants could grow to the utmost perfection. And there is no such place in the world except Jalapa. Here, too, when the daily shower, which is requisite to bring all vegetable nature to perfection, rendered garments of wool necessary to protect humanity from rheumatism, nature had provided the needles and thread needed to fashion them. So that, taken all together, this Indian theory is more probable than many of the unnumbered traditions of this country, where traditions and miracles appear to grow as spontaneously as wild flowers.

In such a spot as this, where all the powers of nature seem to have combined to form an earthly Paradise, and where the surrounding mountain-scenery is unsurpassed on the earth's surface, we might look for en-

larged notions of the power, the majesty, and wisdom of that God who created it all. But images, like dolls, tricked out in the tawdry finery, are the objects which this people adore, and to whom they attribute more miraculous powers than were ever ascribed to the gods of their heathen ancestors. Humboldt says, "This people have changed their ceremonies, but not their religious dogmas."*

But let us take a look at the interior of this town. It is a little disturbed now, as there was a revolution yesterday—a revolution and a counter-revolution in fact, all in one day.

The Governor and Legislature of the State of Vera Cruz, which meets in this place, were taken prisoners in the forenoon, for imposing a tax upon the retail trade; but in the afternoon their friends rallied, and the Governor and Legislature were released, and the rebels driven from the town. In this double battle one man, at least, lost his life, for the funeral took place as we entered. War is a terrible calamity at any time; but when it is carried to that foolish extent of shedding blood, it becomes an intolerable evil, and prudent men show their wisdom by running from it: at least they did so at Jalapa.

Jalapa, it may be here remarked, is built on the site of an old Indian village, which was one of the first to enter into alliance with Cortéz. For the benefit of the original inhabitants, that Franciscan Convent was built by the conqueror. It is now converted into a college. Its steeple is worth a visit, and well rewards the labor of climbing; for from it another view, even more splendid than that I have described, is to be obtained. From this point the snow-covered Orizaba is added to the already imposing prospect; both it and Perote, with the

* Essai Politique.

intervening mountain and valleys, can all be embraced at a single glance. The position of the valleys, which produce the different plants that have been enumerated, are here pointed out; and from this spot, they show the place where the mountain has been pierced in search of the precious metals, while a little way off is the road to the extensive copper-mines.

There is a curious story about the first marriage that took place between a heretic and a Jalapina. The hero held the important position of agent of the English *Real del Monte* Company at Jalapa. In one of the families that had been greatly reduced in their worldly circumstances by the ruin of the *Consulado* of Vera Cruz, was a dark beauty with whom he became deeply enamored. But how to make her his wife was the difficulty. The lady was willing—was more than willing; "for when the fires of Spanish love are kindled, they burn unextinguishably," says the proverb. Or, in the poetical language of the Indians, "it burns as did the fires of Mount Orizaba in its youth—fires that only went out when its head was coated with silver gray." The mother was willing; and no one but the Church had aught to say why they should not be united. How could the holy sacrament of matrimony be profaned by administering it to a heretic? It never had been, it never must be, in the Republic. He might take the woman if he chose, and live with her; but to marry them would be a sin. So said the Padre of the parish, and so said every dignitary of the Church up to the Bishop of Puebla, then the only remaining bishop in the Republic. The intercession of political authorities was invoked. The matter became serious, and a council was held at Puebla to dispose of the case. From this holy council came the intimation to the lover that a bribe of $2000 might be of service. But John Bull

by this time had become stubborn. He had spent money enough; he would spend no more; he would get a chaplain from a man-of-war then at Vera Cruz; or, better still, he would take his intended bride to New Orleans; for he would be married and not mated, as is the case of those who can not raise the fee claimed by the priest. He would not be ranked with that poverty-stricken set that are unmarried, or, as the phrase is, are "married behind the Church." He was no *peon*. It was contrary to an Englishman's ideas to have a wife unmarried; and as no English chaplain came along, he wrote to the Roman Catholic Bishop of New Orleans, giving an account of his difficulties, and inquired if he would marry him under the circumstances. With a liberality that ever distinguishes Catholic functionaries in Protestant countries, he promptly replied that he would marry them personally, if the parties would come to New Orleans, or, if he should chance to be unavoidably engaged, then his chaplain should perform the ceremony. Whereupon our hero and his lady-love started for New Orleans; and being there united in holy matrimony by the bishop, spent the happy month, so long deferred, in festivities, and then returned home, supposing that their troubles were now all at an end.

But this foreign marriage proved to be only the beginning of evil to them. They had committed an unpardonable sin; they had defrauded the priest of his fee, and had set a bad example, which others might follow for the very economy of the thing.

Hardly had our newly-wedded pair found themselves located in their own house, and finished receiving the usual round of congratulations, when the wife was summoned to appear before the priest. She at once complied, accompanied by her husband. The priest inquired why the husband came, as he had not been sent

for; he had only sent for the wife. The husband gave him an Englishman's answer—that she was his wife, and where she went, there it was his place to go. The priest's reply to this opened the cause. The marriage was not lawful, and he must detain her, and send her on to Puebla, and have her placed in a convent. Such was the order he had received, and which he exhibited; and the two soldiers at the door were stationed there to carry the order into execution.

At this point in the affair the Englishman drew two arguments from under his coat, and leveling one of them at the head of the padre, suggested to him the propriety of not interposing any obstacle to the return of himself and wife to their home. This was a poser; an act of open impiety; a Kentucky argument. But there was no remedy. The Inquisition was not now in authority; its instruments of torture had been destroyed; its fires had been extinguished; and so the Englishman got the best of the argument, and retired peaceably to his own home.

At his house the Englishman was waited upon by the Alcalde, who informed him that he had been ordered to take the wife, and that he dared not disobey. But he suggested a method by which the order might be evaded. This was to send the wife every day, at a certain hour, into a neighbor's house, and at that hour the officers would come and search his dwelling, and would accordingly report "Not found." This farce continued to be enacted daily for nearly three months, when the husband, becoming tired of it, wrote to the Bishop of New Orleans an account of the manner in which his house had been besieged, and in due time received a reply from that excellent ecclesiastic, stating that he would satisfactorily arrange the business; at the same time expressing his regrets that

he had not before been informed of the condition of affairs.

In the mean time, another priest in the town chanced to be discussing the all-absorbing question of the day, the heretic marriage, and unfortunately happened to remark that a marriage by an American priest was not a lawful marriage. This was too much for our Englishman, and he answered it—as an Englishman is accustomed to answer insulting remarks in relation to the affairs of his household—not by a single blow, but by such a pommeling as never a priest had sustained since the Conquest. Yet there was no earthquake on the occasion, and Orizaba was not discomposed at witnessing such a shocking act of impiety.

Time moved on, and with it came the parish priest to validate the marriage. But our Englishman would not be *validated.* No, not he; and when the priest began to mutter and to move his hands, the Englishman's blood was up, and so was his foot, and this ceremony was terminated according to a formula not laid down in any prayer-book now extant. This was the end of the war. The pair had passed through many tribulations in order to consummate their union; yet both declare that the prize was worth the contest.

Our good monk, with whom we parted at Vera Cruz, visited the convent at Jalapa, on his journey, and thus records what he saw:

"The night of our arrival at Jalapa we were entertained at the convent of San Francisco, where we passed the day following, as it was Sunday. The income of this convent is great, notwithstanding the community is composed of only six *religios*, though it might well maintain more than a score of them. The guardian of Jalapa is no less vain than the prior of Vera Cruz; but he received us with much kindness, and

treated us magnificently, although we were of another order.

"In this town, as in all others, we observed that the lives and customs of the clergy, both seculars and regulars (monks), were greatly relaxed, and that their conduct completely gave the lie to their vows and their professions. The order of San Francisco, besides the vows common to the other orders; that is to say, chastity and obedience, exacts that the vow of poverty shall be observed more scrupulously than the other mendicants enforce it. Their dress should be of coarse cloth, and of a color to which they have given a name [monk's gray]; their girdles, or cordons, of rope, and their shirts of wool, if they can bear them. They are to go without stockings; and, finally, it is not lawful for them to use shoes, but to wear sandals. Not only are they prohibited having money, but they ought not even to touch it; neither to possess any thing as their own. In their journeys it is forbidden them to mount a horse, although they should fall by the way from fatigue. It is necessary that they should go afoot with sorrow and fatigue; esteeming the infraction of any of these precepts a mortal sin, which merits excommunication and hell. But they neglect all the obligations which the rigorous observance of these rules imposes upon them—to the neglect of all discipline, and to the disregard of the penalties. Those that have been transported to this country live in a manner which does not in any thing show that they have made a vow to God of even trifling privations. Their lives are so free and immodest that it might be suspected, with reason, that they had renounced only that which they could not, or were unable to attain.

"We were surprised and even scandalized at the extraordinary sight of a San Franciscan of Jalapa, riding

a most beautiful mule, with a groom, or rather lackey, behind him, while only going to the end of the village to confess a sick man. His reverence, as he went along, had his garments tucked up from beneath, which exhibited a stocking of orange-color; a shoe of the most exquisite morocco; small clothes of Holland linen; with knots and braids of four fingers in width. Such a spectacle made us observe with more attention the conduct of that friar, and that of others beneath whose broad sleeves were exhibited a jacket embroidered with silk. They also wore shirts of Holland; and hand-ruffs inclosed their hands. But we did not discover, either in their garments or in their table, any thing that indicated mortification; on the contrary, every thing exhibited the same vanity which was noted in the people of the world.

"After supper some of them began to speak of cards and dice, and they invited us to play, in order to contribute to the entertainment of their guests, one hand at a rubber. Almost all of our party excused themselves; some for want of money, others from not knowing the play. At length they found two of our *religious* that would place themselves hand to hand with other two Franciscans. The party being arranged, they commenced playing with admirable dexterity. A little was put down at first; it was doubled. The loss vexed the one, the gain stimulated the other. At the end of a quarter of an hour the convent of the Angelic Order* of our father of San Francisco had converted itself into a gaming house, and the poor *religious* (friars) into profane worldlings. We, who were simply spectators, had occasion to observe what passed in the play, and to acquire matter for reflection upon such a life. As the game went on engrossing in interest, the scandal con-

* This is the title of this order of friars.

tinued to increase. The draughts of liquor were repeated with much frequency; the tongue unloosed itself; oaths mingled themselves with jests, while loud laughter made the edifice to tremble. The vow of poverty did not escape from the sacrilegious mirth. One of the San Franciscans, who had often touched money with his fingers and placed it on the table, when he gained any considerable sum, in order to divert the company, opened his broad sleeve, and with the hem he swept the table of all the stakes, amounting sometimes to more than twenty gold ounces, into his other sleeve; saying, at the same time, "Take care of it thou that canst, I have made a vow not to touch it." It was impossible for me to listen to such imprecations, and to witness such scandalous lives, without being moved;



GAMBLING IN A CONVENT.

more than once I was on the point of reproving them, but I considered that I was a stranger, a passing guest, and besides, what I should say to them would be like preaching to the desert. I therefore rose up without making any noise and went to my sleeping-place, leaving the profane crowd, who continued with their diversions until the dawn. The next day the friar who had played his part with so much facetiousness, with more of the manner of a brigand than a *religious*, more suitable for the school of Sardanapalus or of Epicurus than for the life of a cloister, said that he had lost more than eighty doubloons, or gold ounces—it appearing that his sleeve refused to protect that which he had made a vow of never possessing.

"This was the first lesson which the Franciscans gave us of the New World. It clearly appeared that the cause of so many friars and Jesuits passing from Spain to regions so distant, was libertinage rather than love of preaching the gospel, or zeal for the conversion of souls. If that love, if that zeal, were the motives of their conduct, they might offer their own depravity as an argument in favor of the truths of the gospel. Wantonness, licentiousness, avarice, and the other vices which stained their conduct, discovered their secret intentions. Their anxiety for enriching themselves, their vanity, the authority which they exercised over the poor Indians, are the motives which actuate them, and not the love of God or the propagating of the faith."

CHAPTER V.

The War of the Secret Political Societies of Mexico.—The Scotch and the York Free-Masons.—Anti-Masons.—Rival classes compose Scotch Lodges.—The Yorkinos.—Men desert from the Scotch to the York Lodges.—Law to suppress Secret Societies.—The Escocés, or Scotch Masons, take up arms.—The Battle.—Their total Defeat.

As Jalapa is a pleasant resting-place in a journey to the interior, we will stop here to discuss national affairs for a little while. The first political subject in order is the furious contest that for ten years was carried on between two political societies, known as the *Escocés* and *Yorkinos*—or, as we should call them, Scotch Free-Masons and York Free-Masons—whose secret organizations were employed for political purposes by two rival political parties.

At the time of the restoration of the Constitutional Government of Spain in 1820, Free-Masonry was introduced into Mexico; and as it was derived from the Scotch branch of that order, it was called, after the name of the people of Scotland, *Escocés*. Into this institution were initiated many of the old Spaniards still remaining in the country, the Creole aristocracy, and the privileged classes—parties that could ill endure the elevation of a Creole colonel, Iturbide, to the Imperial throne. When Mr. Poinsett was sent out as Embassador to Mexico, he carried with him the charter for a Grand Lodge from the American, or York order of Free-Masons in the United States. Into this new order the leaders of the Democratic party were initiated. The bitter rivalry that sprung up between these two

branches of the Masonic body, kept the country in a ferment for ten years, and resulted finally in the formation of a party whose motto was opposition to all secret societies, and who derived their name of Anti-Masons from the party of the same name then flourishing in the United States.

When the Escocés had so far lost ground in popular favor, as to be in the greatest apprehension from their prosperous but imbittered rivals, the Yorkinos, as a last resort, to save themselves, and to ruin the hated organization, they *pronounced* against all secret societies. Suerez y Navarro, in his "Life of Santa Anna," thus relates the history of these Secret Political Societies:

"After the lodges had been established, crowds ran to initiate themselves into the mysteries of Free-Masonry; persons of all conditions, from the opulent magnates down to the humblest artisans. In the Scotch lodges were the Spaniards who were disaffected toward the independence; Mexicans who had taken up arms against the original insurgents through error or ignorance; those who obstinately declared themselves in favor of calling the Spanish Bourbons to the Imperial throne of Mexico; those who disliked the Federal system; the partisans of the ancient régime; the enemies of all reform, even when reforms were necessary, as the consequence of the independence. To this party (after the overthrow of the Empire) also belonged the partisans of Iturbide; those who were passionately devoted to monarchy; and the privileged classes.

"In the assemblages of the Yorkinos were united all who were republicans from conviction, and those who followed the popular current—the mass of the people having devoted themselves to this organization. It is enough to say, in order to mark the position of both parties, that among the Yorkinos figured, in great num-

bers, those that believed the name of *republican* was not a mere imagination.

"Some individuals of both associations had the same object and the same identical end, and only differed in the modes of making their principles triumphant. A great number of persons, who co-operated in the creation of the new order, had belonged to the Scotch order, and had labored for the overthrow of Iturbide. They knew the secrets of the Scotch party, their projects, their tendencies; and the desertion of such furnished a thousand elements to the new order to make war upon the party they had abandoned. When parties were fully organized and assailing each other, the contest became terrible, and its consequences fearfully disastrous. Actions the most harmless, and questions purely personal, were matters for the contests of parties. The press was the organ of mutual accusations—now against particular individuals, and now against parties in conjunction. The Escocés multiplied their attacks until they lost all influence in affairs. Generals, Senators, Deputies, and Ministers abandoned their standard, as time increased the power of their rival with every class of individuals that embraced the new order. In the nature of things there was desertion and fear, because, as a writer, who was initiated into both orders, remarks: 'A general enthusiasm had taken possession of men's minds, who thought they saw in the new order the establishment of future prosperity.'"

"The seekers for office found ready access in these lodges to those who had office to dispense. The liberal found in the York lodges the strong support of liberty and liberal institutions. The high functionaries of government found aid and support in the strength of opinions; and the people, ever in search of novelty, united themselves to this association, in order to form one mass

which sooner or later would suppress the privileged classes.

"No intrigue, nor any effort, was able to check the progress of the York lodges. This induced their enemies to present the project of a law in the Senate, where the Escocés had a majority, to suppress secret societies by severe penalties against those who adhered to such associations. For the better insuring of success, the Escocés assumed the language of morality; and, confounding their own affair with that of their native country, clamored hypocritically against the pernicious influence which clandestine meetings exercised in public affairs. According to them the cry of the nation was against secret societies. The bill passed the Senate after prolonged discussion, being supported by those persons who knew it was intended to satisfy an offended party, whose prestige diminished day by day. If the factions had not originated in secret societies, they might have extirpated the evil by proscribing masonry. When have the ravages of the hurricane been found to content themselves with logical and pleasant words? At what time, and in what country, has a law been enforced, where those who were to execute it found an insuperable obstacle in their own sentiments? Indeed, it was impossible to destroy the political fanaticism of the day by the mere dash of a pen! The evil had gone to its utmost limit, and could not be cured by rigor or persecution.

"The demoralization was so great that it extended to the armed force, because the greater part of the chiefs and officers had joined one or the other of the societies. Besides the seductive influences of the lodges, two generals, distinguished for their services in the first insurrectionary war, brought with them a number of soldiers to the party to which each severally belonged. General

Nicholas Bravo was the head of the Escocés, and Don Vincente Guerrero was the leader of the Yorkinos. Both derived support from the names and prestige of these two personages, and from the popularity which each enjoyed with his companions-in-arms. The Scotch party feared the day would come, in which the deputies—the majority of whom were their enemies—would decree the total proscription of all those persons who were hostile, or suspected of being hostile, to the Yorkinos, as the Chambers had fallen into the practice of submitting to the caprices of the dominant order. They therefore appealed to arms, having exhausted the right of petition.

"General Bravo, Vice-President of Mexico, and leader of the Escocés, having issued his proclamation, declaring that, as a last resort, he appealed to arms to rid the republic of that pest—secret societies, and that he would not give up the contest until he had rooted them out, root and branch, took up his position at Tulansingo—a village about thirty miles north of the City of Mexico. Here, at about daylight on the morning of the 7th January, 1828, he was assailed by General Guerrero, the leader of the Yorkinos, and commander of the forces of government."

After a slight skirmish, in which eight men were killed and six wounded, General Bravo and his party were made prisoners; and thus perished forever the party of the Escocés. This victory was so complete as to prove a real disaster to the Yorkinos. The want of outside pressure led to internal dissensions; so that when two of its own members, Guerrero and Pedraza, became rival candidates for the presidency, the election was determined by a resort to arms, which brought about the terrible insurrection of the Acordada.

CHAPTER VI.

Mexico becomes an Empire.—Santa Anna deposes the Emperor.—He proclaims a Republic.—He pronounces against the Election of Pedraza, the second President.—His situation in the Convent at Oajaca.—He captures the Spanish Armada.—And is made General of Division.

We left Santa Anna at Vera Cruz, having just completed the first of those politico-military insurrections which fill up the history of his times. He had added the city of Vera Cruz to the national cause, by a timely insurrection. Iturbide had rewarded him for this important service by bestowing upon him the ribbon of the order of Guadalupe, making him second in command at Vera Cruz. The chief command of the department was bestowed upon an old insurrectionary leader, who was known by the assumed name of Guadalupe Victoria. He was a good-natured, honest, inefficient old man, whose great merit consisted in having lived for two years in a dense forest, far beyond the habitations of men. While thus hiding himself from a host of pursuers, he acquired that habit, supposed to be peculiar to wild beasts, of passing several days without food, and then eating inordinate quantities—a habit which he found impossible to change in after-life, when he had become President of Mexico. The story of this man's sojourn among wild beasts had been told all over Mexico, and had given him a great popularity, which he brought to the support of the national cause.

In 1822 the Mexican nation was still in its swaddling clothes. Its birth had hardly cost a pang; but its in-

fancy, its childhood, and its youth, were to be attended with a series of convulsions, the fruits of the vicious seeds sown in the conception of the new State. By the *pronunciamiento* of a part of a regiment of the King's Creole troops the connection between Spain and Mexico was severed forever, and the colonel of these troops became the Emperor of Mexico. In this revolution the nation acquiesced, and thus discovered to the soldiery their unlimited power when their arms are turned against their own government. From that time onward Mexico, like every other country where the Spanish language is spoken, became the victim of her own soldiery. This liberation of Mexico was by no means the result of the outburst of national patriotism, but the consequence of the utter incapacity of Spain longer to hold the reins of her colonial governments. She indeed sent out a new vice-king to Mexico after the breaking out of the insurrection; but the best that he could do was to sanction what had been done by a treaty at Cordova, in which it was stipulated that Iturbide and the new viceroy, O'Donoghue, should be associated with others in a regency, until Spain should send out one of the Spanish Bourbon princes to occupy the imperial throne of Mexico.

The Spanish parliament refused to sanction the treaty of Cordova; O'Donoghue died, and Iturbide was left in possession of executive power, without a defined office, while an insane opposition sprung up against him in the new Congress which he had called together. This unlooked-for opposition soon convinced him that the tearing away of a nation from its traditional ideas was like the letting out of waters, and that he must either ride upon the wave or be overborne by the tempest. A resolution of Congress, to take from him the command of the army, brought matters to a crisis. Accordingly, on the night of the 18th of March, 1821, he caused himself to be pro-

claimed Emperor by his partisans; and the next day this new revolutionary act was confirmed by Congress, under the intimidation of military force, and the nation again acquiesced.

The revolution had caused a stagnation in all the departments of commerce and of revenue. Iturbide had inaugurated his insurrection by seizing, at Iguala, a million of dollars belonging to the Manilla Company, on its way to Acapulco. He made another like seizure at Perote; but these high-handed measures, while they proved but a drop in the bucket toward sustaining his government, increased his embarrassments, by destroying all confidence; so that his new authority had stamped upon it the unmistakable marks of dissolution. He was an emperor without traditional associations; he had an empire without a revenue; a large standing army without pay. The fickle multitude, who supposed that independence was to prove an antidote for every evil, began to murmur; while a host of demagogues, who envied the good fortune of Iturbide, were all beginning to clamor for a republic. The blow, however, came from an unexpected quarter. Santa Anna had quarreled with a superior officer, General Echevarri, and Iturbide had recalled him from his command. But Santa Anna thought it most advisable to disobey the Emperor; and in the Plaza of Vera Cruz, surrounded by the garrison, he proclaimed a republic, on the 2d of December, 1822. He joined in his insurrection the name and the influence of Victoria; yet both were insufficient to save him from a complete route at the hands of Echevarri. At the critical moment in the affairs of Santa Anna, the Grand Lodge of the Ecoscés decreed the overthrow of Iturbide, and sent orders to General Echevarri, who was a member of the order, to unite his forces to those of Santa Anna in overturning the empire. This was a bitter pill

for that general to swallow, but he swallowed it; and the two leaders together swallowed the empire.

Iturbide, being unable to stem the torrent of insurrection, had abdicated; a Republic had been established upon the ruins of the empire, and Victoria, the "wild man of the woods," was elected first President. He served out his time; but the last year of his government was disturbed by the terrible insurrection of the Acordada, which had arisen out of the election of Pedraza as his successor. Santa Anna was, at the time of this election, at Jalapa, discharging the duties of Vice-Governor of Vera Cruz, when the people of the town surrounded his house and called upon him to pronounce against the election. Thus becoming implicated, he was forced to make a new insurrection. This third *pronunciamiento* of Santa Anna, was on the 5th of September, 1828.

He made his first stand at the Castle of Perote; but finding this too isolated a position, he marched to Oajaca, in the extreme southwest of the Republic, and took up his quarters in the Dominican convent of that city. As he was closely hemmed in by an active enemy, provisions grew scarce, and he was forced to resort to a novel method of supplying himself. On a feast-day, at the San Franciscan church, he dressed a party of his soldiers in the garb of monks, and, having placed them in a convenient position, he made prisoners of the whole assembled congregation, and then proceeded to divest them of all ready cash on hand, and then emptied the contribution-box of the money destined for the poor saints* at Jerusalem, and retired and ended the war; for the successful termination of the insurrection of the Acordada in the city of Mexico accomplished the object for which Santa Anna took up arms—the declaration

* Breva Reséña Histórica, p. 280.

by Congress, that General Guerrero, a man of mixed blood, was the real President elect, instead of Pedraza, a white man, and the candidate of the aristocracy.

When King Ferdinand had regained his despotic authority, in 1825, by the aid of French bayonets, he bethought himself of Mexico, the most productive of his lost colonial possessions in America, which had yielded, to his predecessors, the total sum of $2,040,048,426,* or rather an annual revenue in silver dollars of $6,800,000 during a period of three hundred years. He was also incited by his impoverished *noblesse*, who could no longer obtain colonial appointments for their sons. The Spanish merchants also complained of the loss of their monopolies. But what at last aroused him to activity was the expulsion of the Spaniards from Mexico, in consequence of the ascendency of the democratic party. Those of mixed and Indian blood were now truly enfranchised; and they were heard to utter strange voices, which had until then been suppressed by the combined power of a spiritual and temporal despotism: so that the bones of Cortéz, the benefactor of the Kings of Spain, were no longer safe in the convent of San Francisco, where they had lain for three hundred years.† They were in such imminent danger of being dragged out and scattered to the winds by the mob, as those of "the accursed" enslaver of their race, that they were removed by stealth, and for a time deposited in the most sacred shrine in Mexico: afterward they were secretly removed to Europe, where they cried to the Spanish king for vengeance on the sacrilegious nation. An Armada was at last fitted out, and landed at Tampico; and now all Mexicans, from the President down to the humblest *peon*, watched the result with the deepest anxiety, as

* See King's Proclamation, printed at Havana, 6th September, 1831.
† See note E.

they saw Santa Anna undertaking the defense of the country with untried soldiers. For on the issue of the struggle depended the question whether the whole nation should be again reduced to servitude, or whether they should be left in the enjoyment of their newly-acquired liberty. The contest was one of several days' continuance: when at last it was terminated by a capitulation, all Mexico rang with rejoicing; and Santa Anna, then not thirty-five years of age, received the military rank which he now holds—General of Division.

CHAPTER VII.

In the Stage and out of the Stage.—Still climbing.—A moment's View of all the Kingdoms of the World.—Again in obscurity.—The Maguey, or Century Plant.—The many uses of the Maguey.—The intoxicating juice of the Maguey.—Pulque.—Immense Consumption of Pulque.—City of Perote.—Castle of San Carlos de Perote.—Starlight upon the Table-land.—Tequisquita.—"The Bad Land."—A very old Beggar.—Arrive at Puebla.

THE time allotted for my visit to Jalapa had come to a close. I took out the ticket, endorsed *Escala donde le convengo*, which I translated—"Let him stop when, where, and as long as he pleases," and once more took my seat in the stage, which, on a fine afternoon, was starting for Perote upon the table-land. This short journey lay across the mountain of Perote, passing over an elevation of 10,400 feet, the highest elevation that a stage-coach has yet reached, and one from which the traveler can oftentimes enjoy a view of all the vegetable "kingdoms of the world in a moment of time." I took my seat upon the top of the coach, above the driver, that I might enjoy a last lingering look at this Nature's paradise, before the mountain-ridge should intervene between the world I had left behind, and the great salt desert that we were soon to traverse.

The prospect from the coach-top, as we traveled onward, was even more beautiful than that I have already described. For several miles beyond Jalapa we were descending and passing through one of those valleys of which the Spanish poets so often sing, where the roadside is covered with a profusion of the flowers and vegetation that flourish only in the most luxuriant

soil. The valley was soon passed, and we began to ascend so rapidly, that before an hour had passed we could mark the changing vegetation, and observe the products of a colder climate; for this changing vegetation is a barometer, which, in Mexico, marks the ascent and descent as regularly as the most nicely-adjusted artificial instrument. So accurately are the stratas of vegetation adjusted to the stratas of the atmosphere which they inhabit, as to lead the traveler to imagine that a gardener's hand had laid out the different fields which here rise one above another upon the side of the mountain that constitutes the eastern inclosure of the table-land. The fertility of the soil did not seem to diminish; it was only the character of the vegetation that changed step by step, as we wound our way up toward the summit of the Perote.

We changed horses at La Hoya, a place memorable in the annals of civil war, as the spot where General Rincon blocked up the pass when Santa Anna was retiring in 1845, a fugitive from the country. Here the road becomes so steep as to induce the traveler to walk a little, for the better opportunities he can thus have of surveying the novel sights that present themselves at every turn of the road. When he is fatigued with climbing, and breathing the peculiar air of this altitude, he can seat himself by the roadside to wait the arrival of the coach, and to catch momentary glimpses, among floating clouds, of the country through which he has passed in his ascent from the coast. He can see a long distance through such a rarified atmosphere; but it is only a bird's-eye view, as the mass that is heaped together is more than his vision can fully take in, before a cloud, ragged and torn, has passed across the picture. The eye is delighted more with the details of a scene, than with this mass of all

the excellences of all the climates. Still he has time to divide into sections the world below him; and as he thus contemplates in part, he at length realizes as a whole the scene that is presented. The art of man never has, and never can, produce such a combination in the arrangement of the courses of vegetation. As the traveler stands at an elevation where pine-trees grow in the tropics, where a post-and-rail fence incloses a field of grain, and where a storm of snow and sleet had fallen only a few hours before, he can look down upon hills and plains, one below another, each one, in the descending scale, exhibiting more and more of tropical productions, until the regions of cocoa-nuts, and bananas, and sarsaparilla, and palms, and jalap, and vanilla, are reached in his perspective. This is a specimen chart, where all the climates and productions of the world are embraced within the scope of a single glance.

It is time to re-enter the coach, and close all openings, for a dense fog is coming up from the sea, and has thrown so thick a curtain over the prospect, that the eye can not penetrate it. The long line of freight-wagons, that have served to mark the route that we have come, disappear, one after another: we ourselves are soon enveloped in darkness. With the fog has come a chill and piercing air, and the pleasure of our mountain ride is now over. Still we move on and up with little hindrance, as the road on this side of the "divide" is in good repair. But as we go down on the other side, we are impeded by freight-wagons held fast in the mud, and unable to move down-hill—it being easier to drag a wagon up an ascent than to draw it down-hill through stiff mud. An entirely different world now presents itself. We are in a fine grain-growing country. Well-cultivated fields stretch out as far as the eye can reach,

with farm-houses scattered here and there, that strikingly remind the traveler of his northern home at this season of the year.

The fences here are chiefly formed by rows of the *maguey* or *century plant*, growing at the side of a ditch. Here it reaches its greatest perfection, and adds materially to the fine appearance of the fields, and is seen every where upon the table-land. It grows wild upon the mountains, and springs up in uncultivated places, as a weed. It is cultivated, as a domestic plant, in little patches, and is also planted in fields of leagues in extent. It grows luxuriantly in the richest soils, and shows itself in those desert plains, where nothing else, except a few spears of stinted grass and chaparral can exist.

The uses to which the maguey is applied are more numerous than the methods of its cultivation. When its immense leaf is pounded into a pulp, it forms a substitute for both cloth and paper. The fibre of the leaf, when beaten and spun, forms a beautiful thread, resembling silk in its glossy texture, but which, when woven into a fabric, more resembles linen than silk. This thread is now, and ever has been, the sewing thread of the country. The leaf of the maguey, when crudely dressed and spun into a coarse thread, is woven into sail-cloth and sacking; and from it is made the bagging in common use. The ropes made from it are of that kind called Manilla hemp. It is the best material in use for wrapping paper. When cut into coarse straws, it forms the brooms and whitewash-brushes of the country; and, as a substitute for bristles, it is made into scrub-brushes; and, finally, it supplies the place of hair-combs among the common people.

The great value of the maguey plant arises from the amount of intoxicating liquid which it produces, which

is the chief source of intoxication among the common people of the table-land. There are two species of this plant cultivated. One of them flourishes in the desert portions of the country, from which an abominable liquor is distilled, called *mescal*, or *mejical.* The other is the flowering maguey, or century plant, of which so many fabulous stories are told in the United States. This is one of the wonders of the vegetable world. Until the plant has reached its tenth year, or thereabouts, there is no trace of a flower. In its fifteenth year, or thereabout, there are certain appearances which indicate that the central stem, or *hampe*, which sustains the flower, is about to form in the centre of the plant. If persons are not on the watch to cut out the heart at the proper time, the *hampe* shoots out, and grows to about the height of a telegraph post—for which I have often mistaken it—absorbing in its development the sap, which, when fermented, forms the intoxicating drink called *pulque.* The sprouting of the stalk takes place in November or December; but the beautiful cluster of flowers, for which it is so much admired, does not form at its top till February. In this last month, the monster leaf that envelops the *hampe* begins gradually to unfold itself, exposing to view a slender stalk, higher than a man on horseback, with arms extended. On this stalk grow the flowers. Such is the century plant —in botanical language, the *Agava Americana.*

The juice of the maguey, in its unfermented state, is called *honey-water.* It is gathered from the central basin by cutting off a side-leaf and cutting out the heart, just before the sprouting of the *hampe*, for whose sustenance this juice is destined. The basin, thus formed, yields every day from four to seven pints—according to the size and thriftiness of the plant—for a period of two or three months. The process of taking

it out of the plant is a little curious. Into the end of a long gourd is inserted a cow's horn, bored at the point; through this horn and into the gourd the juice is sucked up by applying the mouth to a hole in the opposite side of the gourd. From the gourd-shell the juice is emptied into a bottle formed from the skin of a hog, which still retains much of the form of the animal. To form this bottle of honey-water into *pulque*, all that is necessary is to put into it a little of the same material which has been laid aside till it became sour, which operates like yeast, causing the honey-water to ferment.

As soon as the maguey juice in the hog-skin has fermented, it is *pulque;* and is readily sold for eight, and sometimes as high as twenty-five cents a quart, producing a very large revenue upon the cost of the plant. It is not ordinarily sold at wholesale; but each maguey estate has its retail shops in town, from which the whole product of the estate is retailed out. One man, who has five of these shops in the city of Mexico, keeps his carriage; and is reckoned, among the magnates of the land, deriving from this source alone, it is said, $25,000 a year. The excise which Government derives from the sale of this liquor, which, in taste, resembles sour butter-milk, amounted to $817,739 in the year 1793.

The traveler from the coast always arrives at Perote at a late hour; and as he leaves it again at an early hour next morning, he recollects nothing of it but its chilly night air, and the good supper which he was too cold to enjoy. But on his return from Mexico, he usually has an hour of daylight, which he can improve in a survey of this small and cleanly town. Here the freight-wagons, with their twenty horses apiece, stop to recruit; and the cargo-mules, that take this route, are gathered in the immense stable-yards, which give to the place the appearance of a collection of caravan-

saries. The whitewash-brush has been industriously applied to the outside of the houses; and though they are chiefly built of that frail material, dried mud, they present a very neat and tidy appearance, giving one a very correct idea of what may have been the appearance of one of the first class of Indian towns in the times of Cortez.

A few rods to the north of the town stands the castle of San Carlos—a square fort, with a moat and glacis. It is built in the best style of fortifications of the last century, having been designed as a depository for silver, when, in consequence of the wars of Spain with maritime nations, it was not deemed prudent to send it forward to the coast: it was much used for this purpose when the road below was blocked up, in the times of the insurrection, that began in the year 1810. At one time the accumulation here was so great that it is said to have amounted to 40,000,000 of silver dollars; weighing about 1300 tons, or a little short of the whole silver export of two years. This castle is now in a fine state of repair. It has a large garrison of lancers, and at the time of my visit was daily in expectation of the arrival of Santa Anna. From this castle Santa Anna, in 1828, issued his *pronunciamiento* against Pedraza. In this castle he was imprisoned by Rincon, in 1845, after his capture at Xico. From this castle he was banished by decree of the Mexican Congress; and to it he was now returning to hold the supreme power in the State.

At two o'clock in the morning we were aroused from our comfortable beds to take our places in the stage; and soon we were again upon the road. There is something exceedingly attractive in the appearance of the skies upon this elevated table-land, 7692 feet above the ocean. The morning star-light is very beautiful. It is so much clearer, and the stars are therefore so much

brighter here than in the dense atmosphere where we inhabit, that the traveler, half chilled and sleeping, rouses himself to contemplate the brilliant sights above him. The brightest stars that he has watched from childhood up, are brighter now than ever. New stars have filled the voids in his celestial chart, and satellites are dancing round well-known planets. The North Star is still visible, now 19° above the horizon. The Dipper has dipped far down to the northward. The Southern Cross—that mysterious combination of five stars, that emblem of the faith of Southern America, which only reaches full meridian at midnight prayers—is here 25° above the horizon, shining brilliantly. And then there are so many unknown southern stars, and so many unfamiliar constellations, that the short hours of night are well spent upon the driver's box.

We have been gradually descending into what appears to have once been the bottom of a salt lake. The ground is partially incrusted with a compound salt called *tequisquita*, is composed of equal proportions of muriate of soda, carbonate of soda, and insoluble metal (common earth): this compound is used by the Mexican bakers and soap-boilers as a substitute for salt and soda. A stinted grass is here and there scattered in patches over the *bad land*, as these barren plains are called; but the dry earth, which is rarely moistened for six months together, is covered with drifting sand, which is driven about by the hot winds of this desert.

How great was the change from what we had passed! The celestial chart, that we had been admiring with so much rapture, had gradually rolled itself up, and as the sun came out, we had a view of the dreariness around us. It was truly a *bad land*—a land of evil—even a land for wolves to prowl in, and where vultures watch for the carcasses of dying mules, and where robbers ply their

calling with little fear of detection. Here, in the midst of all this dreariness, we saw a pretty lake, and beautiful scenery around it, that looked for a little while like an enchanted scene, and then vanished into air. We passed the hostelry of Tepeyagualco, where water is drawn from a fabulous depth, and soon came to that most celebrated spring of fresh water, situated upon the the boundary-line of the two departments of Vera Cruz and Puebla, and bearing the poetical name of "The Eye of Waters." But we were followed by a driving storm of sand all the way to Nopaluca, where we breakfasted at twelve o'clock.

As we came out from breakfast we encountered an old beggar, whom I had often seen before at this place. He was so old that Time seemed to have forgotten him, and he too had forgotten Time. He could only reach his age by approximation: he recollected that his third son was earning day-wages when the decree came (in 1767) for the expulsion of the Jesuits. This would make the old beggar 130 years of age, if we call the son eighteen, and the father twenty-five at the time of his birth. Poor old man! how much he has suffered from outliving his own kindred. One after another he has followed to the grave his children and his children's children, to the third and fourth generation, till now the lad that leads him by the hand, the only link that binds him to the race of the living, is of the sixth generation.

Toward evening, after we had passed the storm of dust, we came to the large village of Amosoque, which is the only town of any magnitude between Perote and Puebla. It is noted for its excellent spurs; and was formerly much more noted as a haunt of robbers. From this village we were driven in a little more than an hour to the city of Puebla.

CHAPTER VIII.

Puebla —The Miracle of the Angels.—A City of Priests.—Marianna in Bronze.—The Vega of Puebla.—First View of the Pyramid of Cholula.—Modern Additions to it.—The View from its Top.—Quetzalcoatl. — Cholula and Tlascala. — Cholula without the Poetry.—Indian Relics.

Puebla de los Angelos—the "Village of the Angels"—derives its name from a miracle that occurred during the building of its celebrated Cathedral. While its walls were going up, angels are said to have come down from heaven nightly, and laid on the walls the same amount of stone and mortar that the masons laid the day previous. It is, of course, a sacred city. Its people, particularly the women, are the most devout in all Mexico; and, of course, the most profligate, as we shall show presently. It is a city of priests, and monks, and nuns, and friars, of every order, white and gray, black and greasy. As in all Spanish-American towns, the fronts of the houses are plastered and painted in fresco; but the fresco painting has gone too long without renewing, and the town looks now, as it did two years ago, gray, streaked, and inhospitable. The unwashed houses are filled with unwashed people; and the streets swarm with filthy beggars, and monks asking for alms in the name of the most blessed Virgin. The streets, thanks to the male and female chain-gangs, are kept quite clean. But all else is dirty. If the angels, when they finished their work on the Cathedral, had left a whitewash brush behind them, they would have done the city a real service. The houses, inside



MONASTIC COSTUMES.

and out, and occupants too, and the reputation of its women from olden time, all need whitewashing.

Perhaps I could not present a more deplorable picture of the moral condition of the ladies of Puebla, who are celebrated for being so very devout, "but not very virtuous," than by copying the following from Madame Calderon de la Barca's "Life in Mexico:"

"Yesterday (Sunday), a great day here for visiting after mass is over. We had a concourse of Spaniards, all of whom seemed anxious to know whether or not I intended to wear a Poblana dress at the fancy ball, and seemed wonderfully interested about it. Two young ladies or women of Puebla, introduced by Señor ——, came to proffer their services in giving me all the necessary particulars, and dressed the hair of Josefa, a little Mexican girl, to show me how it should be arranged; mentioned several things still wanting, and told me that every one was much pleased at the idea of my going in a Poblana dress. I was rather surprised that *every one* should trouble themselves about it. About twelve o'clock the President, in full uniform, attended by his aids-de-camp, paid me a visit, and sat about half an hour, very amiable as usual. Shortly after came more visits, and just as we had supposed they were all concluded, and we were going to dinner, we were told that the Secretary of State, the Ministers of War and of the Interior, and others, were in the drawing-room. And what do you think was the purport of their visit? To adjure me by all that was most alarming, to discard the idea of making my appearance in a Poblana dress! They assured us that Poblanas generally were *femmes de rien*, that they wore no stockings, and that the wife of the Spanish Minister should by no means assume, even for one evening, such a costume. I brought in my dresses, showed their length and their propriety,

but in vain; and, in fact, as to their being in the right, there could be no doubt, and nothing but a kind motive could have induced them to take this trouble; so I yielded with a good grace, and thanked the cabinet council for their timely warning, though fearing that, in this land of procrastination, it would be difficult to procure another dress for the fancy ball.

"They had scarcely gone, when Señor —— brought a message from several of the principal ladies here, whom we do not even know, and who had requested that, as a stranger, I should be informed of the reasons which rendered the Poblana dress objectionable in this country, especially on any public occasion like this ball. I was really thankful for my escape.

"Just as I was dressing for dinner, a note was brought, marked *reservada* (private), the contents of which appeared to me more odd than pleasant. I have since heard, however, that the writer, Don José Arnaiz, is an old man, and a sort of privileged character, who interferes in every thing, whether it concerns him or not. I translate it for your benefit:

"The dress of a Poblana is that of a woman of no character. The lady of the Spanish minister is a *lady* in every sense of the word. However much she may have compromised herself, she ought neither to go as a Poblana, nor in any other character but her own. So says to the Señor de C——n, José Arnaiz, who esteems him as much as possible."

If priests were angels, the town would be rightly named, for it is a city of priests and *religious;* men who have consecrated their lives to begging, and count it a merit with God to live on charity. Convents of male and female *religious* abound, and, as the books tell us, $40,000,000, in the form of mortgages upon the fairest lands of the Vega of Puebla, is consecrated to

their support, under the supervision of the bishop. That smoking mountain, that outlet to infernal fires, is so close at hand as to suggest the idea that this whole mass of impurity and moral rottenness may have been vomited up from the bottomless pit, or that the fallen angels, in their way thitherward, tarried here to found a sacred city, see its Cathedral finished, and then led the way down the inclined plane to that brimstone convent where friars "most do congregate."

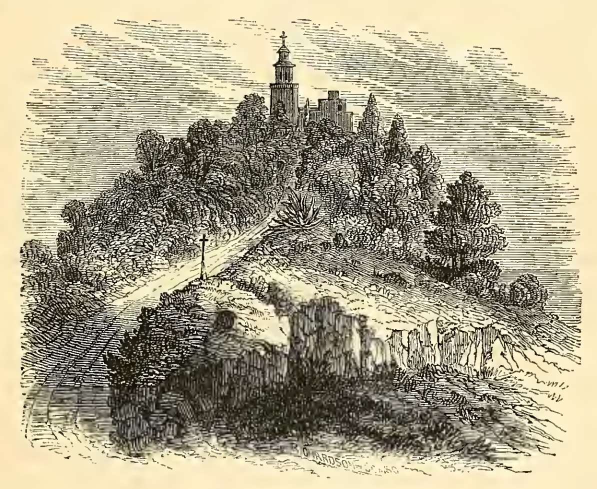
In this city of dirty houses and dirty faces there is, nevertheless, some public spirit. Since I was last here a bronze equestrian statue has been set up in the Grand Plaza. It is a bronze woman, sitting quietly and easily upon a furious bronze horse. The horse is in a terrible state of excitement, but the woman is not alarmed in the least; for she seems to be well aware that it is only make-believe passion, badly executed in bronze. Who could this woman be but Malinche, or Marianna, the Indian mistress of Cortéz—a fit patroness of the women of Puebla. She was the first convert that Cortéz ever made to Christianity; and her sort of Christianity is not unusual in Mexico. That beautiful cone that rises so majestically out of the plain between Puebla and Tlascala bears the name of Malinche; but as this name was applied to her paramour as well as to herself, an additional testimonial, in the form of a bronze statue, was deemed requisite; for she is considered here as almost a saint, and would be altogether such if she had not been the mother of children, and ended her career by getting married. That act of getting married—not her former life—rendered her unfit for a saint; for how could an honest housewife be a saint? She might have been the best of mothers and the best of wives, and have performed scrupulously the duties that God had assigned to her upon earth; but she was lacking in ro-

mance, in those aerial materials from which saints are made. Saints are made in damp, cold prison-cells, where, in the midst of self-inflicted misery, they see visions, dream dreams, and perform cures upon crowds as deluded as themselves.

It was a delightful afternoon when I mounted my horse for a ride to Cholula. The wind of the day before had driven away every vapor from this exceedingly transparent atmosphere, excepting only the cloud that was resting upon Popocatapetl, a little below its snow-covered summit. It was such weather as we have at "harvest home," and it was truly a "harvest home" throughout the whole Vega. Men were working in gangs in the different fields, gathering stalks, or husking corn, or cutting grain, or plowing with a dozen plows in company, or harrowing, or putting in seed. It was harvest-time and seed-time together. The full green blade and the ripened grain stood in adjoining fields in this region of perpetual sunshine. As I rode along between carefully cultivated estates, I did not fail to catch the enthusiasm which groups of cheerful field-laborers always inspire in one whose happiest recollections run back to the labors of the farm. Such are the varieties this country affords: three days ago I was enjoying the most delicate tropical fruits, which I plucked fresh from the trees; yesterday I was traversing a salt desert covered with clouds of drifting sand; and I was now among grain-farms of a cold climate.

Right before me, as I rode along, was a mass of trees, of ever-green foliage, presenting indistinctly the outline of a pyramid, which ran up to the height of about two hundred feet, and was crowned by an old stone church, and surmounted by a tall steeple. It was the most attractive object in the plain; it had such a look of uncultivated nature in the midst of grain-fields. It would

have lost half its attractiveness had it been the stiff and clumsy thing which the pictures represent it to be. I had admired it in pictures from my childhood for what it was not; but I now admired it for what it really was —the finest Indian mound on this continent; where the Indians buried the bravest of their braves, with bows and arrows, and a drinking cup, that they might not be unprovided for when they should arrive at the hunting-grounds of the Great Spirit. A little digging, a few years ago,* has furnished the evidence on which I base this assertion. This digging has destroyed the old monkish fiction to reinstate the truly Indian idea of the dead, and of the necessity of mounds for their burial.



PYRAMID OF CHOLULA.

By going round to the north side, I obtained a fine view of the modern improvements which have been con-

* The living witnesses of the result of this excavation are still at Cholula, and the fact is mentioned in several American works; my inference from the fact is the only novelty in the matter.

structed upon this Indian mound. I rode up a paved carriage-way into the church-yard that now occupies the top, and giving my horse to a squalid Indian imp who came out of the vestry, I went in and took a survey of the tawdry images through which God is now worshiped by the baptized descendants of the builders of this mound. My curiosity was soon gratified, and I returned to my place in the saddle.

I followed the wall around the church-yard, stopping from point to point to look upon the vast map spread around on every side. Orizaba, which I first saw when 150 miles out at sea as a mammoth sugar-loaf sitting upon a cloud, had at Jalapa, and at "the eye of waters," different forms, while here it appeared to be joined with the Perote, forming the limit of the horizon toward the east. On the west were Popocatapetl, Iztaccihuatl, and Malinche; while smaller mountains and hills seemed to complete the line of circumvallation, which gave to the elevated plain of Puebla the aspect of the bed of an exhausted lake, and to the isolated hills, rising here and there upon its surface, the appearance of having been islands when the waters covered the face of the land.

The cloud was still resting upon Popocatapetl; but its crest, far above the clouds, was in that region where, in the tropics, ice and snow lie undisturbed forever. The marks which it bore of having once been the smoke-pipe of one of Nature's furnaces, furnished us with the translation of its name—"The mountain with a smoking mouth." But that lake of fire has long since ceased to burn, and when the mountain had last emitted smoke was unknown to the oldest inhabitant. And that other mountain, Iztaccihuatl, or the "White Woman," lying so quietly and snug, in her covering of perpetual snow, at the side of the volcano, called up in the minds of the Indians the strange conceit of man and wife. There

were forests on the mountain sides and trees along the rivers covered with green, but all else looked dry and parched. Seldom, indeed, has the eye of man ever rested on a finer farming country than the great plain of Puebla, and seldom are lands seen better cultivated.

Cholula was of old sacred to Quetzalcoatl, the "God of the Air," who, during his abode upon earth, taught mankind the use of metals, the practice of agriculture, and the arts of government. Translating myth into history, we may call him the great Aztec reformer. He is represented as a man of fair complexion with curling hair and flowing beard, very different from the type of the Aztecs. On his way from Mexico to the coast he remained for a while at Cholula, where a mound and temple was raised to his honor.

This tradition made Cholula the Mecca of the Indian world; and with the merchants who came to attend the annual fair held at the base of the mound came also hosts of pilgrims, to offer sacrifice to the memory of that god who introduced flowers into the native worship, and discouraged cruelties and human sacrifices.

At Cholula I was so fortunate as to procure one of the images of Quetzalcoatl, cut in stone, with curled hair and Caucasian features. I afterward verified the same by comparison with the great image found at Mexico, not without strong suspicions that both were counterfeits; for in this country even the most sacred records are open to suspicion. Popular tradition and the most approved authors will have it, that some stray white man had found his way among the Mexicans, and taught them empirically the calculations and divisions of time, and a very few of the arts of civilized life unknown to our Indians, and they venerated him as a god. But the probabilities are that the whole story is a myth, and for once the Inquisition was right in suppressing specula-

tion in relation to him, whether he was Saint Thomas or not.

At the base of this pyramid, three hundred years ago, flourished the rich and opulent city of Cholula, which, according to Cortéz,* contained 40,000 houses. He says that he counted from this spot 400 mosques,† and 400 towers of other mosques—that the "exterior of this city is more beautiful than any in Spain." That is, as he and all other historians of the Conquest agree in representing it, it was at the same time not only the Mecca and the commercial centre, but the centre of learning and refinement of Mexico. Here Indian philosophers met upon a common footing with Indian merchants. Its government, too, was republican; and upon these very plains, three hundred years ago and more, flourished two powerful republics, Tlascala and Cholula. The first was the Lacedæmon, the second the Athens of the Indian world, and when united they had successfully resisted the armies of Montezuma and his Aztecs. But Aztec intrigue was too powerful for the American Athens, and the polished city of Cholula having been subdued by the same arts by which Philip of Macedon had won the sovereignty of Athens—a combination of intrigue and of arms—Tlascala was left alone to resist the whole force of the Aztec empire, now aided by the faithless Cholulans. Yet Tlascala was undismayed by the new combination brought to bear against her, and did not readily listen to the proposed alliance of Cortéz. It was only after three terrible battles with Cortéz, that Tlascala learned to appreciate the value of his alliance—an alliance which has conferred upon her perpetual

* Cortéz's "Letters," Folsom's translation, p. 71.

† This word mosques Cortéz constantly makes use of, apparently to keep before the people of Spain the idea that he was conducting a holy war.

freedom and a distinct political organization to the present time.

This is the poetry of the thing. Let us give it a little matter-of-fact examination.

The spot on which I stand, instead of being what it has often been represented to be, is but a shapeless mass of earth 205 feet high, occupying a village square of 1310 feet. It is sufficiently wasted by time to give full scope to the imagination to fill out or restore it to almost any form. One hundred years ago, some rich citizen constructed steps up its side, and protected the sides of his steps from falling earth by walls of adobe, or mud-brick; and on the west side some adobe buttresses have been placed to keep the loose earth out of the village street. This is all of man's labor that is visible, except the work of the Indians in shaving away the hill which constitutes this pyramid. As for the great city of Cholula, it never had an existence; for if there had been, only three hundred years ago, such a city here, composed of 40,000 houses, with 400 towers, besides the 400 mosques, then some vestige or fragment of a fallen wall or a ruined tower would still be visible. But I searched in vain for the slightest evidence of former magnificence, and was driven to the unwelcome conclusion that the whole city was fabricated out of some miserable Indian village, inferior, perhaps, to the present town of one-story, whitewashed mud huts.

My contemplations were broken in upon by a swarm of squalid women and children from the church vestry, importuning me to buy relics in clay, which might answer the double purpose of images of saints or of heathen gods, according to the taste of the purchaser. But when they found me impracticable, they brought out their greatest curiosity—a flint arrow-head, such as used to be plowed up in scores near the place where I was

born. Thoroughly disgusted with the sight of this Acropolis, with this ancient Athens of mud, I turned my horse's head toward Puebla; and as I rode on, I met scores of these modern Athenians trotting homeward, bareheaded and barefooted, carrying "papooses" on their backs, while their faces, forms, and hair, and ragged dress, were the very counterpart of the Indians of North America.

The Indians of Puebla have long enjoyed the distinguished honor of being the governing men, while the white inhabitants were ineligible to a seat in the city councils. This city was formerly an Indian village, bearing the indigestible name of Cuetlaxcapen, or "Snake in the Water;" but, in 1530, the Vice-King Mendoza established here a Spanish colony, but left the original government unchanged; so that, down to the independence, the city administration was conducted by an Indian alcalde, assisted by a council of four Indians. Notwithstanding the anomalous form of its government, Puebla has ever been a great manufacturing town, and at this day consumes a quantity of cotton equal to some of our large manufacturing cities.

CHAPTER IX.

A Ride to Popocatapetl.—The Village of Atlizco.—The old Man of Atlizco and the Inquisition.—A novel Mode of Escape.—An avenging Ghost.—The Vice-King Ravillagigedo.—The Court of the Vice-King and the Inquisition.—Ascent of Popocatapetl.—How a Party perished by Night.—The Crater and the House in it.—Descent into the Crater.—The Interior.—The Workmen in the Volcano.—The View from Popocatapetl.—The first White that climbed Popocatapetl.—The Story of Corchado.—Corchado converts the Volcano into a Sulphur-mine.

One of the first objects of interest in Mexico is the volcano of Popocatapetl. A stage runs from Puebla to Atlizco, but beyond that village the visitor must travel upon horseback. Atlizco is worthy of a special notice from its situation in a most fertile valley, and its peculiar location at the base of a conical hill. This hill, like every attractive locality in Mexico, is the scene of romantic traditions of the common people. From many, I select one as an illustration of the state of society in the times of the vice-kings.

There once was, the tradition runs, in this village an old *hidalgo* who possessed a plantation in the immediate neighborhood of the town. His family consisted of himself and two daughters; and he was rich. Upon a certain time, one of those strolling monks, with whom the country abounds, chanced to offer an indignity to one of the daughters, and the old man chanced to return the indignity by inflicting upon the monk such a beating as never poor friar had yet received in the vice-kingdom—such a one as the feelings of an outraged father alone could justify. This was not the end of the matter; it

was only the beginning of evil to the old man, as he well knew, for he had laid his hands upon one of the consecrated—one who had received the sacrament of "Holy Orders;" and, above all, he was rich enough to tempt the cupidity of the Inquisition, which always watched with jealous care over the orthodoxy of those whose estates, when confiscated, would add to "the greater glory of God," that is, to the treasury of the "Holy Office."

Guilty or not guilty, the old man had but one mode of escape, and that was by avoiding an arrest. To effect this object he resorted to a novel expedient. As soon as he heard that his accuser had started for Mexico, it was given out that the old man had suddenly died. A circumstance by no means thought remarkable, when it became known that he had assaulted a priest. As he had not yet been accused, his neighbors ventured to come to his funeral; and a coffin, with his name and age marked upon it, was decently buried in holy ground. The funeral fees, too, were secured before the estate was pounced upon by the familiars of the Inquisition. The daughters put on the deepest mourning, and hid themselves from the public gaze, among their relatives; for they had not only to endure the loss of home and estates, but were to be shunned as the accursed of God—the children of one dying while under the accusation of sacrilege. As for the Inquisition, its officials did not care to investigate the question of the decease, for it had reaped all the benefit it might hope for from his conviction—"The Holy Office" had become his heir.

Strange appearances and stranger noises after a time were heard about the cave that is said to be in the top of the hill of Atlizco, and sometimes a ghost had been seen wandering about the hill by certain benighted villagers; and one time, when the accusing monk was re-

turning rather later than usual from a drunken revel, this ghost, who had now become the town-talk, chanced to fall in with him, and to give him such a beating as few living men could inflict, and then disappeared. Still there was no earthquake, and the sun rose and set as though no injury had been done to a priest.

Time wore its slow course along, without any important incident occurring in this matter, until the reputation of the new Virey, Ravillagigedo, reached Atlizco. Shortly thereafter there appeared at the vice-royal palace in the city of Mexico an old man, who related in a private audience the story of his griefs and of his misfortunes, and insisted that, in striking "the Lord's priest," he had no intention of committing an act of impiety, but that the feelings of a father had overcome him in an unguarded moment, and induced him to avenge an attempt made to dishonor his daughter. The story of the old man touched the Virey, who had a manly heart wrapped up in a forbidding exterior. But it was a delicate undertaking even for a vice-king to attempt to wrest a rich estate out of the clutches of the "Holy Office" without himself being suspected of heresy, or of disloyalty to the Church. Yet Ravillagigedo was never at a loss for expedients when justice was to be done or the oppressed relieved. The best advice, however, that he could give the old man was to hide himself again, and to send his daughters to Mexico to accuse the monk.

Upon a set day, the vice-king was found arrayed in state, surrounded by a council of Inquisitors, before whom the daughters, in the deepest mourning, presented themselves as the accusers of the profligate monk. They stated, with an artless simplicity which could not fail to convince, the story of the wrongs the monk had done them. The Inquisitors, sitting in the presence of the incorruptible Virey, could not, for very shame, do other-

wise than declare unanimously that the monk, and not the old man, was worthy of the censure of the Church.

"Then let us wipe away the stain that rests upon the fair fame of these ladies as daughters of one dying suspected, by decreeing their father's innocence," said the Virey.

This being assented to, the record of the old man's innocence was made up, and, when duly attested by the Inquisitors, was handed to the daughters. A door was at this moment opened, and there entered into the august presence a gray-headed old man, to whom the daughters presented the record. The old man, when he had received the record, advanced, and, bowing humbly, made confession of his fault. It was a bitter pill for the "Holy Office" thus to be tricked into the performance of a common act of justice, and in this way to lose a valuable estate. From this time onward, it is said that Inquisitors were never known to hold court with a Virey.

At Atlizco horses must be procured for the journey up the mountain, for beyond this point there is no carriage-road. I here follow the verbal narrative of Mr. Frank Kellott, the artist of whom I have already made mention, as I dared not venture where bleeding of the lungs is produced by the rarity of the atmosphere and by the fatigue.

"The company consisted of Mr. Corchado, the proprietor, Mr. Munez, a neighboring gentleman, three ladies, and myself, all on horseback. Sixteen Indians had been sent forward on foot early in the morning, with all the conveniences to make the trip a safe and agreeable one. The party went cheerfully up the mule-road that leads to the mountain rancho of Zacopalco, one of the highest inhabited points upon our globe. The soil upon the mountain, composed of volcanic mud, yields such rich grasses, that almost at the upper edge of the

timber there is a milk-house (*lecheria*), where a cattle-herd, if caught out at night, may find a shelter. The inner man being well cared for at the rancho, we journeyed on, following the path that led us through a tangled mass of trees and plants, and among *barrancas* whose sides were covered with pines. The timber grew shorter and more stunted as we proceeded, until, at the height of 12,544 feet, the pines entirely disappeared. A little farther on, at an elevation of 12,692 feet, we were at the limit of vegetation. After journeying a league or so over the yielding sand mixed with sharp stones, twelve of our Indians and our horses gave out. From this point for a little way farther, our party proceeded on foot, with the four remaining servants.

"We had gone only a little way farther when two of our fair companions also gave out, and we sent them back to the rancho with the returning horses and the fatigued servants, for there was now no time for delay, if we intended to reach the summit that day. The third lady went bravely on, and would probably have enjoyed the honor of being the first woman that had ever ascended Popocatapetl, had it not been for the unfortunate arrangement she had made in her wardrobe. Instead of putting on the pantaloons, or *bloomers*, she had added extra skirts by way of precaution against the cold; so that when she had climbed about 3000 feet over volcanic sand and loose stones, she gave out from fatigue and the bruises she had received in her numerous falls. It was a painful effort even for those of us who had no *skirts* to impede us to get on; and it was imprudent for her to proceed farther, for the icicles would be in her way as much as the sand and stones; for these icicles were like spikes projecting upward from the rocks, and between which we should have to place our feet and pick our way as best we could without falling upon them.

In this state of things there was no alternative, and we were reluctantly obliged to dissuade her from farther effort, and to consign her over to the kind attentions of three more of our Indians, who had given out, to conduct her down the mountain.

"Unfortunately, one of the last three Indians sent back had in his pocket all the chocolate, an article almost indispensable to the comfort of a party climbing a high mountain, and, unconscious of our loss, we continued our way until it was too late to remedy this loss. The basaltic rock which we had now reached was covered with the icicles which I have described, and we found no little difficulty in placing our feet between them, and guiding ourselves with the iron-pointed sticks which had been furnished us; while the dizziness caused by looking back upon the world we had left behind added to our troubles.

"Mr. Corchado, to draw off our attention from our own hardships, related to us the story of the death of six of his workmen, who undertook to make the journey down the mountain by night. Each of them had a load of stolen brimstone on his head. The day after this rash and criminal attempt, their dead bodies were found in such a situation as to indicate plainly the manner of their death. Stiffened with the intense cold, and impeded by their heavy burdens, they had stumbled in the darkness, and had fallen upon the sharp ice. One had his cheek pierced, and the others had divers wounds and bruises marked upon them as they lay frozen in death. The story of these unfortunates was not calculated to inspire us with very pleasant reflections, in case the weather should change while we were on the mountain.

"We climbed on, having reached the basaltic rock at an elevation of 16,805 feet, and with exhausting labor we traveled upon it until toward evening, when we

came to that immense yawning abyss, the crater. The mouth was about three miles in circumference, of a very irregular form. Into this we entered, and soon arrived at the house which was to be our lodging for the night. This house was a curiosity in its way; as it was not built like any other house, and could not be, on account of the rarity of the atmosphere at this elevation of 17,125 feet, and the impossibility of obtaining sufficient oxygen, in a closed room, to feed combustion. It was therefore built in the form of a miniature volcano. There was an outside and an inside wall, of a circular form, the outside wall sloping inwardly, and the inside wall, which rested on pillars, sloping outwardly, until it met the outside wall. The fire was built in the open court, in the centre of the building, and the party sat under the arches and warmed themselves. The night that we were there, the perverse smoke took the same direction as the heated air, and filled the whole inside to suffocation, so that our condition was most disagreeable, notwithstanding the arrangements that Mr. Corchado had made in his own apartment for the comfort of his guests, for the reflection of the sun on the snow had thrown a film over our eyes, in spite of our green vails. Our stomachs were nauseated at this giddy height, and, though we had almost every other kind of eatable and drinkable, our appetites craved only chocolate, which we could not obtain. Our heads were dizzy, and our limbs were weary, and we lay down in a dense smoke to try to sleep.

"Morning came to our relief, and with it the film had passed from our eyes. We looked up to the top of the mountain above us, and then down into that fearful abyss into which we were soon to descend. We could eat no breakfast, and could drink no coffee, and so we were soon ready for our day's journey. We followed a narrow footpath until we reached a shelf, where we were

seated in a skid, and let down by a windlass 500 feet or so, to a landing-place, from which we clambered downward to a second windlass and a second skid, which was the most fearful of all, because we were dangling about without any thing to steady ourselves, as we descended before the mouth of one of those yawning caverns, which are called the 'breathing-holes' of the crater. They are so called from the fresh air and horrid sounds that continually issue from them. But we shut our eyes and clung fast to the rope, as we whirled round and round in mid air, until we reached another landing-place about 500 feet lower. From this point we clambered down, as best we could, until we came among the men digging up cinders, from which sulphur, in the form of brimstone, is made.

"We took no measurements within the crater, and heights and distances here can only be given by approximation. We only know that all things are on a scale so vast that old Pluto might here have forged new thunder-bolts, and Milton's Satan might have here found the material for his sulphurous bed. All was strange, and wild, and frightful.

"We crawled into several of the 'breathing holes,' but nothing was there except darkness visible. The sides and bottom were, for the most part, polished by the molten mass, which had cooled in passing through them; and if it had not been for the ropes around our waist, we should have slipped and fallen we knew not whither. We almost fancied that, in the moving currents of air, we heard the wailings of the lost in the great sulphurous lake below. The stones we threw in were lost to sound unless they hit upon a projecting rock, and fell from shelf to shelf. The deep darkness was fearful to contemplate. The abyss looked as though it might be the mouth of the bottomless pit. What must have been the effect

when each one of these 'breathing holes' was vomiting up liquid fire and sulphur into the basin in which we stood? How immeasurable must be that lake whose overflowings fill such cavities as this! It is when standing in such a place that we get the full force of the figures used by the Scriptures in illustrating the condition of the souls that have perished forever.

"Let us turn from great to smaller things—to witness the labors of the men who work, and eat, and often sleep in the volcano. Some are digging sulphur and placing it in baskets, while others are waiting to carry it upon their heads up the side of the crater. Others, again, out of our sight far up the mountain, are working at the oven, when the weather is clear, and there is no cloud between them and the sun, as it is only in the finest weather that men can work upon the top, or carry burdens to the hacienda. When the weather is fine, all the works are in full operation, and good profits are realized by furnishing brimstone for the manufacture of sulphuric acid.

"We are at the top once more; and now that our eyesight, which we lost in climbing the mountain, is restored to us, we will take a view of the lower world. Looking toward the west, every object glows in the brightness of the rising sun, except where the mountain casts its vast shadow even across the valley of Toluca. How strangely diminished now are all familiar objects that are visible! The pureness of the medium through which things are seen presents distant objects with great distinctness, but it will not present them in their natural size, for it can not change the angle of vision. The villages upon the table-land were apparently pigmy villages, inhabited by pigmy men and pigmy women, surrounded with pigmy cattle, and garrisoned by pigmy soldiery. It is, by an optical illusion, Liliput in real

life. Had the English satirist placed himself where we now stood, he would have more than realized the picture which his fancy painted. He might have seen the marshaled hosts of Liliput marching to the beat of drum, in the proud array of war.

"If you wish to see all the sights, you must walk around the mountain, and look down its steepest side, where there is no table-land, into the 'hot country.' The distance is so vast, the descent so steep, that an inexperienced climber suffers from dizziness. If you climb to the very summit, 250 feet above the mouth of the crater, you will find more surface about you. But it is a point where few can desire to remain long, or to visit it a second time."

In Cortéz's letters to the Emperor we read as follows: "As for sulphur, I have already made mention to your Majesty of a mountain in this province from which smoke issues; out of it sulphur has been taken by a Spaniard, who descended seventy or eighty fathoms by means of a rope attached to his body below his arms; from which source we have been enabled to obtain sufficient supplies, although it is attended with danger. It is hoped that it will not be necessary for us to resort [again] to this means of procuring it." . . . . "As the Indians told us that it was dangerous to ascend, and fatal to those who made the attempt, I caused several Spaniards to undertake it, and examine the character of the summit. At the time they went up, so much smoke proceeded from it, accompanied by noises, that they were either unable or afraid to reach its mouth. Afterward I sent up some other Spaniards, who made two attempts, and finally reached the aperture of the mountain whence the smoke issued, which was two bow-shots wide, and about three fourths of a league in circumference, where they discovered some sulphur which the

smoke deposited."* (Bernal Diaz says that the crater was perfectly round, a mile in diameter.—Vol. i. p. 186.) During one of their visits they heard a tremendous noise, followed by smoke, when they made haste to descend; but before they reached the middle of the mountain there fell around them a heavy shower of stones, from which they were in no little danger.

In or about the year 1850, Corchado, an active and enterprising white man, had become a favorite with the Indians at the foot of the mountain, who proposed to him that he should accompany them when they again undertook one of their expeditions into the volcano, which of late had been very frequent. This was a proposition that exactly accorded with his adventurous character. Accordingly, on an appointed day, he appeared at the rendezvous, with a rope, a piece of sail-cloth, and an iron bar. Thus provided, the party, which was a large one, started up the mountain, but one by one they gave out, until only Corchado and a single Indian arrived at the mouth of the crater. Here, unfortunately, Corchado fainted from the loss of blood and fatigue; and the Indian, not knowing what better to do, covered him with the sail-cloth, and then started down the mountain for assistance. In a short time he revived under the sail-cloth, and from his dangerous position he drew himself into the volcano, that he might not perish from cold outside. He descended as far as the shelf, and, looking over into the abyss, he found himself so refreshed by the atmosphere of the volcano that he brought down the bar, sail-cloth, and rope, determining to pass the approaching night at the bottom of the volcano. When he had fixed his bar and rope,

* This must have been the great fissure, and not the crater. I see no objection to this statement; for in this Cortéz had no motive to falsify, and it is the ordinary appearance of an active volcano.

the relieving party arrived, and all descended, one by one, upon the rope to a point where they passed the night in safety.

Corchado, on his return, gathered up some of the scoria and carried it to Puebla, when it was found to contain so large a percentage of sulphur as to warrant its 'denouncement' as a sulphur-mine. Capital was procured at Puebla sufficient to set up the rude apparatus we have already described, by means of which a very handsome profit on the adventure was realized. But, owing to a lawsuit, in which the affair was at that time (1852) involved, no effort had yet been made to pierce the mountain, or to explore a passage through some vent or fissure. A good path had been made up the mountain, and in the month of May it was considered quite a safe undertaking to visit these sulphur-works.

CHAPTER X.

Texas.—Battle of Madina.—First Introduction of Americans into Texas.—Usurpation of Bustamente.—Texas owed no Allegiance to the Usurper.—The good Faith of the United States in the Acquisition of Louisiana and Texas.—Santa Anna pronounces against Bustamente.—Santa Anna in Texas.—A Mexican's Denunciation of the Texan War.—His Idea of our Revolution.—He complains of our grasping Spirit.—The right of the United States to occupy unsettled Territory.—A few more Pronunciamientos of Santa Anna.—The Adventures of Santa Anna to the present Date.

We must resume again the narrative of historical events, in order better to set forth the condition of the country through which we are traveling.

Texas is a turning-point in the history of Mexico. Captain Don Alonzo de Leon, in the year 1689,* by command of the Vice-King of New Spain, took formal possession of Texas, in the name of His Most Catholic Majesty of Spain. Afterward a few military and missionary settlements were commenced, with indifferent success, as the Indians were of a less docile character than those of the southern provinces. They were ever restive under the yoke of spiritual taskmasters, so that the feeble missions and presidios had only a sickly existence down to the time of the breaking out of the civil wars of Mexico.

We have already noticed the statement that, in the year 1819, a Mexican general routed at the River Madina a party of 3000 men, who were on their way to join the Mexican insurgents. The above number is somewhat improbable; say there were 500, which would be

* *Bréva Reséña Histórica*, by Gen. Tornel. Mexico, 1852. P. 135.

about as many as could well be mustered at that early period for a filibustering expedition at New Orleans.

In 1820 Moses Austin applied to the Spanish authorities, and obtained from them the right to settle a certain number of families in Texas. He died soon after, and his son Stephen obtained a confirmation of the grant, or, rather, a new grant, from the authorities established at Mexico under the Federal Constitution of 1824. Under that constitution Texas was annexed to Coahuila, and, together with it, was formed into the united state of Coahuila and Texas. From the authorities of this state divers other Americans obtained grants of land under the provisions of the colonization law of the Mexican Congress of the year 1824. From this time all things went smoothly on, and the grantees were busily engaged in introducing the number of families which were stipulated for in the said law, and in the grants made under it, when the Spanish armada landed at Tampico.

In consequence of the great dangers threatening the country, Congress had conferred dictatorial powers upon the President of the Republic, Vincente Guerrero. By virtue of his dictatorship, he had invested the Vice-president of the Republic, Bustamente, with the command of an army of reserve, which he established at Jalapa. As soon as the Spanish army had capitulated to Santa Anna, Bustamente put forth a *pronunciamiento*, and, marching to the city of Mexico, he deposed the President, whom he afterward caused to be cruelly put to death. Having now, by means of a successful military insurrection, possessed himself of the executive power, he proceeded by violent means to overturn, one by one, the governments of the individual states. In this war against the states he was also successful, except in the most distant one, that of Coahuila and Texas.

Texas clearly owed no allegiance to the usurper Bus-

tamente. It was an independent state in all respects, excepting those powers it had conceded to the general government by adopting the Federal Constitution. The subversion of this Constitution reinstated Texas as an independent republic. It owed no farther allegiance to Mexico. Texas might at once have applied for admission into our Union, or have asked to be annexed to any other foreign state, pleading not only her inherent right to do so, but the excessive cruelties that Bustamente inflicted on those state authorities that opposed his usurpations.

The learned and eloquent General Tornel, distinguished alike as a statesman and a soldier, from whose popular history we have below made a brief extract, in pleading the cause of his country, charges bad faith against the United States in the acquisition of both Louisiana and Texas, but in both arguments he fails to make out a case. By the treaty of San Ildefonso in 1800, France acquired an imperfect title to Louisiana; by the treaty of Paris in 1803, she conveyed all her title to the United States. But, before the United States would pay over any money on account of the treaty of 1803, she required Spain to confirm the treaty of San Ildefonso by putting France into the actual possession of Louisiana. This being done, and not till it was done, did the United States pay over the $15,000,000 stipulated as the purchase money. The dispute with Spain about boundaries was settled by the treaty for the acquisition of Florida, in 1819, which established boundaries that were confirmed in a subsequent treaty with Mexico. Thus far, certainly, there was no breach of faith.

On the night of January 3d, 1832, the garrison of Vera Cruz *pronounced* against the usurping government of Bustamente, which was then suffering dreadfully from the want of funds. A delegation was sent the same

night to Santa Anna, who had been in retirement at his estate of *Manga de Clavo* since the murder of his friend, President Guerrero. This fourth insurrection was prosecuted with varying success for several months, but was finally terminated by the capitulation of Bustamente at Puebla, and the recalling of Pedraza from banishment in the United States, to serve out the few months that remained of his term of office as President.

In 1832 Santa Anna was elected successor to Pedraza as President of the Federal Republic of Mexico. Texas had now of right the option of returning into the family of Mexican States, or of maintaining her separate existence; but she was under no obligation to return, for, the confederacy having been once broken up, it was optional with the only member that had not submitted to the usurper to re-enter this unreliable family, or to continue outside. This election was not long open; for, by the *pronunciamiento* of Toluca (1835), the Federal Constitution was again abolished, and Santa Anna became dictator in fact, if not in name. The clergy were at the bottom of this last revolution, and they demanded, as the price of their support, the extirpation of heresy from the territory of the Republic. This meant the indiscriminate slaughter of all Texans. Santa Anna, who, in all his previous wars, had never shown a disposition to be cruel to the vanquished, was so dazzled with the prospects before him as to be willing to make the slaughter of the Alamo and of Fannin's division an offering to a priesthood who were plotting for the restoration of the Inquisition. The battle of San Jacinto was, in its consequences, more disastrous to the designs of the ecclesiastical party than even to Santa Anna himself.

Let me stop in my narrative of events to translate a Mexican's eloquent denunciation of the Anglo-Saxon race. It is from the pen of General Tornel, a most un-

compromising enemy of that race and of its religion. Thus he opens his account of the Texan difficulty:

"In order to understand what we to-day (1852) are, and what we to-day value, it is indispensable to discover, and to perpetuate the history of one of the greatest scandals of the age—all of its antecedents, all of its consequences, all that can aid in coming to knowledge of this greatest act of injustice of which the Mexican nation has been the victim.

"Those who cross the sea change their skies, but not their nature. The Anglo-Saxons abandoned their country from physical and moral necessities, and on account of their political and religious quarrels. Transporting themselves to the virgin forests of America, they brought with them the characteristics of Northmen; they were distinguished for sobriety, laboriousness, and industry; for ardor in their enterprises; for constancy, and for that spirit of adventure which subjugates all by the right of conquest. They leveled all obstacles by the vigor of their arm and the sweat of their brow, and from their successes has arisen the hope of acquiring every thing by the inspiration of their talents and the force of their genius.

"The English, of whom John Cabot was a compatriot, came by the northern route [to America], and discovered an immense country, whose rivers are the grandest, whose forests appear to be antediluvian, whose lakes would be called seas in Europe; with harbors on an extensive coast which rival the greatest in the world. It has a soil suited to every purpose of agriculture. In short, it has facilities for all enterprises, and for raising the material of a productive commerce sufficient to establish advantageous relations with the Old World, and for creating an independent society; for supplying its necessities; for making its condition enviable; for rivaling the

power, the influence, and the destinies of its parent country.

"The country which they discovered they found scarcely inhabited, although here and there wandered some tribes without social organization, without government, without the power of concentration, even to the extent which numbers give to savages. They [the colonists] early learned that they could establish their dominion without resistance, and that they could extend it as far as they could open the country with the ax of the active colonist, who considered himself the heir of undiscovered wealth, which would result from an inevitable destiny. The colonies which were established along the coast, and those which were formed in the interior, increased, as increases the gentle rill in its onward course by uniting with other rills and with rivers, until, becoming one vast torrent, it precipitates itself into the ocean. The colonies of Tyre, of Carthage, or Rome were never comparable with the Anglo-American colonies, who appropriated to themselves, in less than a century, regions more extended than the half of Europe.

"The observer of the providential destiny of the Anglo-Saxon race in America notices that the emancipation of the thirteen American colonies, which constituted so many states and an independent nation, instead of being the result of the alleged political grievances, was rather the impulsive force of expansion, which encountered insuperable obstacles while the states were colonies subordinate to a European nation. They were retarded in their advances by relations and compromises with other nations. The Anglo-Saxon, when translated to the wilds of America, needed only a stopping-place in order to found a peculiar and exclusive polity, which should enable him to march ever onward in his aggressions and usurping institutions.

"The United States of America lost no time in making themselves powerful; a nation rich in its industry, enviable in its commerce, respectable in its social organization, which are so favorable to the advancement of the condition of man. When the government had regulated, with great prudence and wisdom, the interior system of the states, it placed itself upon the watch for the compromised circumstances of embarrassed European states that possessed colonies on the American continent. Some of these colonies were contiguous to the limits which the United States had acquired definitely by the treaty of peace of 1783. In order to augment, at the expense of her neighbors, her possessions, already immense, and not yet well populated, she set about acquiring territory by astuteness, by cunning, by violence, and also by justifiable means, when such were available. Spain first, and Mexico afterward, have been her victims; and to-day these rich and powerful states display the spoils, for such they are in reality, which they have wrested from us. Such are the people that already rival those nations of Europe whose territories are the most extensive, and whose commerce is spread over all the seas."

My limits will not permit me to follow General Tornel through his statement of the manner in which Louisiana, Florida, and Texas were acquired, and to notice his complaints of the injustice committed by the Americans in all these acquisitions. He loses sight of the fact that Spain had no title to her possessions in America but that of discovery, and that very doubtful claim had not, in a period of 300 years, been strengthened by actual settlement. Three or four dilapidated mud forts, and as many more feeble missions, constituted the sum total of the Spanish possession of Texas; and settlements scarcely worthy of the name in the other northern departments constituted all the title that Spain could

put forth to those countries; while the right of Mexico was as much weaker, as Mexico was a weaker power than Spain, and morally incapable of settling the disputed territory. The claim of the United States was the necessity for land in which to settle her population, which was so rapidly augmenting by foreign immigration, that once in ten years she requires a portion of the wild land nominally belonging to Mexico, and once in ten years she must take it.

In 1836, while Santa Anna was a prisoner in Texas, Bustamente, then in banishment in Europe, was elected President by the same party that had chosen Santa Anna as Dictator. In 1838, the government having incurred the hostility of France, Vera Cruz was blockaded for several months, during which time a night foray was made into the town by a party of French sailors, headed by the Prince de Joinville. On their return, they were pursued by Santa Anna to the Mole, where they stopped farther pursuit by discharging a cannon, which deprived Santa Anna of one of his legs, and effectually wiped out the recollections of his unfortunate Texan campaign. In 1841, the government being no longer able to raise funds at two per cent. a month, the Minister of War, Valencia, pronounced against Bustamente in the citadel of Mexico. The result was, that Santa Anna was again elevated to supreme power, according to the plan of Tacubaya, and the interpretation he put on that plan. In 1843 a slight change was made in the Constitution, but he remained in power until 1845, when, having left the capital to put down the insurrection of Paredes, Congress declared against him. Herrera was appointed President, and Santa Anna was imprisoned for a while in the castle of Perote, and finally banished from the country. In 1847 he was recalled by the Federal party, with the consent of President Polk, and became the

chief support of the war, notwithstanding his totally inadequate means for organizing a successful defense. When the defense could no longer be protracted, he left the city by night, and retired to the West Indies, and afterward to Carthagena, where he remained until he was recalled in 1852, and again restored to supreme authority.

We may sum up the politico-military life of Santa Anna by saying that he has been engaged in eight *pronunciamientos.* Five of these have been made by himself; three by others, for his benefit. Twice he has been chosen President by the Federal party of the Federal Republic of Mexico. Three times he has been made President by the Central, or Ecclesiastical party. He has been twice banished from Mexico, and each time recalled again and placed at the head of affairs. He has twice been taken prisoner, when his captors held long consultations upon the propriety of putting him to death. He has, in turn, been the candidate of all parties, and has served all parties faithfully in turn, but most faithfully of all he has served himself. Actively engaged through life as a politician and a soldier, he has found time to readjust the whole complicated system of Mexican laws, and, in a series of volumes of autocratic decrees, he has drawn from that chaotic mass a new system of jurisprudence, that will stand as a monument of his genius as long as the Mexican nation shall continue.

CHAPTER XI.

From Puebla to Mexico.—The Dread of Robbers.—The Escort.—Tlascala.—The Exaggerations of Cortéz and Bernal Diaz.—The Truth about Tlascala.—The Advantages of Tlascala to Cortéz.—Who was Bernal Diaz.—Who wrote his History.—First View of Mexico.

At early twilight, two stage-loads of passengers, drawn rapidly by twelve wild horses through the now-deserted streets of Puebla, approached the gate that opened out upon the road to Mexico. The rattle of the wheels and the clatter of so many hoofs had awakened the gate-keeper, and at our approach the ponderous portals that inclosed the city by night flew open, and away we whirled out into the beautiful vega of Puebla.

In times of civil disorder, this is a fine field for robbers to ply their vocation in; and even now, when all was quiet, there was no little apprehension of a visit from these sovereigns of the road. The passengers had noticed my unmistakable Anglo-Saxon name, as it was called at the stage-door, and, when I had taken my seat, an elegant, long Colt's revolver was passed to me by a passenger in full uniform. Such is one of the advantages that a traveler enjoys who belongs to a race of men of acknowledged courage—an advantage that enabled me to travel alone across the continent without encumbering myself with a weapon; for, where all supposed me fully armed, and skilled in the use of weapons by instinct, I found it convenient to go unarmed. Upon the present occasion, I did not wish to raise a smile of incredulity by protesting that I had never fired a pistol in my life, so I quietly consented to play the part of hero.

By displaying my weapon carelessly in my hand when we stopped to take coffee at Saint Martin's, I procured a seat upon the outside, which had been refused me at Puebla.

Our escort consisted of a body of six lancers, who, standing at the roadside, saluted us as we passed, and then rode after us at the top of their speed. Poor fellows! they found it hard riding to keep up with the coach. It was some consolation for them to see a man seated on the top of the stage with a Colt's pistol, even if he did not know how to use it, and for once they rode out their beat without getting frightened at their shadows. As the robbers were as great cowards as themselves, whether the man on the box was really a fire-eater or not, it answered the same purpose. These stage-guards are heroes in their way; they always come when the road appears the safest, and never fail to ask for charity, but invariably leave you just as the coach approaches a thicket. A few days ago, this guard caught a fellow on the road whom they believed to be a robber, and hung him with a pocket-handkerchief.

We are now passing the borders of that famous Indian republic, of the high table-land, which shut out despotism by a lofty wall,* and was so completely isolated in the times of Montezuma that its people could obtain no foreign products, not even cotton or salt;† whose food was the maize which they cultivated, and the game which they caught upon the snow-capped mountains; whose clothing was made from the maguey, and from skins of animals taken in the chase; a people whose government was a council of elders, which was presided over by an hereditary chief; whose political institutions have been

* Folsom's *Letters of Cortéz*, p. 49.

† *Bernal Diaz.* Lockhart's translation. London, 1844. Vol. i. p. 157.

the study and admiration of the learned of many lands. That is, in plain English, they were an ordinary tribe of North American savages, obtaining their living, as other Indians did then and do now, by the cultivation of Indian corn and hunting, having the same crude form of government that is common to all the savage tribes of North America. They gloried in their savage notions of independence, and submitted only to the merest shadow of authority. They had not yet reached that point of social organization at which the loose government of savages gives way to the despotism of the next stage of advancement, which we shall call *barbarism.* The difference between the Tlascalans and the Aztecs was the same difference that exists between the North American savages, who live in underground wigwams,* and the barbarous tribes of the interior of Africa, that live in cities of mud huts above the ground, and who yield a slavish obedience to a half-naked emperor, who sits or squats upon an ox-hide in a mud palace, exercising the power of life and death, according to his momentary caprice, upon thousands of trembling slaves. The concentrated power and wealth of a whole tribe is in single hands, and is made available for conquest and for the sensual enjoyment of a single individual. Savages can only act in concert when all are agreed, hence councils are their governing power, and the orator has as much influence among them as the successful warrior; but when they have advanced a step, and power has become concentrated, the orator becomes silent, and the war-chief is the government.

I had read with avidity the histories of Mexico, and gave to them implicit credence, until I stood upon the Indian mound of Cholula, and searched in vain for the

* "We buried our dead in one of the subterranean dwellings."—*Diaz*, vol. i. p. 152.

least vestige of that magnificent city of 40,000 houses, which, only 300 years ago, was in the height of its prosperity; and though it is not in the power of man, in the space of a thousand years, wholly to obliterate the traces of a great city, yet not a vestige of the Cholula of Cortéz can now be found. As I followed up the investigation, I soon discovered that not a vestige of any of the cities that entered into the alliance with Cortéz can now be found. Not a vestige exists even of the old city of Mexico, except the calendar and sacrificial stones, of which I shall speak hereafter.

Cortéz says that a dry stone wall, nine feet high, inclosed Tlascala from mountain to mountain, through which he entered between overlapping semicircles of the wall. He says that he was attacked first by an army of 6000 Indians, then by an army of 100,000 on one day, and on the next by 149,000. He says farther, "I attacked another place, which was so large that it contained, according to an examination I caused to be made, more than 20,000 houses." Of the capital of Tlascala, he says, "It is larger than Granada, and much stronger, and contains as many fine houses and a much larger population than that city did at the time of its capture."

A comparison of the statements of Bernal Diaz and those of Cortéz will cast some discredit upon the narrative of the former. The stout old chronicler cuts down the 100,000 Indians in the second battle to 50,000, and makes no mention of the third great action, in which 149,000 Indians were said by Cortéz to have been engaged. Here is another comparison:

"There is," says Cortéz, "in this city [Tlascala], a market, in which every day 30,000 people are engaged in buying and selling, besides many other merchants who are scattered about the city. The market contains a great variety of articles, both of food and clothing, and

all kinds of shoes for the feet, jewels of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and ornaments of feathers; all as well arranged as they possibly can be found in any public square in the world."*

Now see the difference between this great Munchausen and his professed apologist and companion, the writer of Bernal Diaz, who was familiar with the suppressed manuscript of Las Casas, and makes quotations from it. "The elder Xicotencotl," says Bernal Diaz, "now informed Cortéz that it was the general wish of the inhabitants to make him a present, if agreeable to him. Cortéz answered that he should at all times be most happy to receive one; they accordingly spread some mats on the floor, and over them a few cloaks, upon which they arranged five or six pieces of gold, a few articles of trifling value, and several parcels of manufactured *nequen*—altogether a poor present, and not worth twenty pesos (dollars). The caziques, on presenting these things to Cortéz, said to him, 'Malinche! we can easily imagine that you will not exactly experience much joy on receiving a present of such wretched things as these; but we have told you before that we are poor—possessing neither gold nor other riches, as the deceitful Mexicans, with their present monarch, Montezuma, have, by degrees, despoiled us of every thing we had. Do not look to the small value of these things, but accept them in all kindness, and as coming from your faithful friends and servants.' These presents were, at the same time, accompanied by a quantity of provisions."†

Thus, according to Cortéz, the Tlascalans dwelt in cities rivaling the most polished and commercial cities of Europe; according to Diaz, they were so poor that they were unable to make a present worth twenty dollars! Cortéz gives a view of "a large wall of dry stone,

* *Letters*, p. 61. † *Bernal Diaz*, vol. i. p. 179.

about nine feet in height, which extends across the valley from one mountain to the other: it was twenty feet in thickness, surmounted throughout its whole extent by a breastwork a foot and a half thick, to enable them to fight from the top of the wall." Diaz says, "We came to an enormous intrenchment, built so strongly of stone, lime, and a kind of hard bitumen, that it would only have been possible to break it down by means of pickaxes."* Such a wall, or the vestiges of it, would last for thousands of years; for it is not in the destructive power of man wholly to obliterate it, and yet I have been utterly unable to find even a ruin, and I verily believe the whole of this Chinese wall is a fiction.

Tlascala is an Indian reservation of an oval shape, sixty-nine miles long by forty-two miles wide. Its climate is cold. Its soil is not remarkably good. It has had its independent government since the time of Cortéz. Its means of subsistence have been increased, and extensive manufactories have been established. The only enumeration ever made of its inhabitants was in 1793, when it was found to contain 51,177 souls. In the extravagant official estimate of last year, its population is set down at 80,171.† Cortéz says that Tlascala contained a population of 500,000 inhabitants, according to a report made by his orders. We have here our historians within metes and bounds, between mountains and stone walls; a perfect non-intercourse established with all the world; all foreign means of supply cut off, and the Indians dependent for subsistence upon their own rude cultivation of maize. My readers may call me extravagant if I should say that Tlascala probably contained about 10,000 inhabitants in the time of Cortéz, and could therefore, in an emergency, produce 1000 warriors. A greater number than this would be contrary

* Vol. i. p. 144.

† *Collección de Léyes*, 1853, p. 184.

to the laws of population. I might here stop and call hard names, but it is not my purpose to "bring a railing accusation" against any. My only duty is to place evidence before the reader, and then let him judge how much reliance is to be placed upon any historical statements that have been trimmed and modified to suit the purposes of the Spanish Inquisition.

The quick wit of Cortéz early discovered that Tlascala was a great natural fortress, and that he could make it the centre and base of his operations in the wars he was contemplating against the different Indian tribes of the table-land. The hatred borne against the Mexicans by the Tlascalans assured him of their co-operation against Montezuma. Hence the Tlascalans were especially favored. They shared with him in all the perils of his enterprise, and in the plunder gathered from the conquered tribes; for with them rested the question whether he should succeed, and be hailed as the hero of a holy war, or should be branded as a buccaneer, robber, and enslaver. And when, in course of time, the Indian element became the ruling power, curses loud and deep were muttered against the enslaver of the Indians, and the Tlascalans came in for their share of imprecations.

But who was Bernal Diaz? This would be a strange question to ask in a country where there was liberty of speech and liberty of the press, but in Spain the censorship was not only repressive, but it was "suggestive." It not only suppressed the writings of authors, but compelled them to father productions that were the very opposite of those they wished to publish. Take the case of poor Sahagun, who wrote a refutation of the historian of the conquest, under the pretense of giving the Indian account of that event: when his book was finally allowed to see the light, after a delay of many years, it was found that his own account of the conquest had been suppressed, and the regular Spanish account had been sub-

stituted. Of Las Casas's "Apology for the Indians,"* which had occupied thirty-two years of his life, that part only was allowed to appear which treated of Saint Domingo. But his refutation of the histories of the conquest of Mexico is wholly suppressed. To have proved the Conquistadors a gang of unprincipled buccaneers would have spoiled a Holy War, which was just what the Inquisition would not allow to go before the world. To the little work of Boturini on Mexico there are appended, 1. The declaration of his faith in the Roman Catholic Church in the most unequivocal terms. 2. The license of the Jesuit father. 3. The license of an Inquisitor. 4. The license of the Judge of the Supreme Council of the Indias. 5. The license of the Royal Council of the Indias. 6. The approbation of the "qualificator" of the Inquisition, who was a barefooted Carmelite monk. 7. The license of the Royal Council of Castile. Beyond all this, the writer must be a person in holy orders, and be a person of sufficient influence to obtain the favorable notice of all these bodies, who were instinctively hostile to the diffusion of all information, particularly in regard to the New World. Nor was this the end of the difficulty; the license of any one of these officials could be revoked at pleasure, and, when republished, the work had to be re-"*viséd.*" Even as late as the year 1825, a Spanish standard author could not be republished without expurgation.† With such facts before us, it is safe to declare that not a single statement of fact that affected either the interests of the king or the Church was ever published in Spain or her colonies during the three hundred years of the existence of the Inquisition; but every thing published was modified to suit the wishes of the censors, without any regard to the sentiments of the putative author.

* *Lord Kingsborough*, vol. vi. p. 265. † *A Year in Spain, by an American.*

But who was Bernal Diaz? How came he to be familiar with the writings of Las Casas that never saw the light? Had he access to the secret archives of the convent? He refers to the account of Las Casas as follows:

"These [the slaughters at Cholula] are, among others, those abominable monstrosities which the Bishop of Chiapas, Las Casas, can find no end in enumerating. But he is wrong when he asserts that we gave the Cholulans the above-mentioned chastisement without any provocation, and merely for pastime."* The history of Diaz is among the standard literary productions of that age, and is a very picture of candor and simplicity. On every page there are such evident efforts at truthfulness as to raise a suspicion that something more than a simple narrative was the object of writing this book fifty years after the conquest. By supposing the author to be only sixteen years old when he came to America, Lockhart makes him only seventy years of age when he wrote the work. But if we suppose him to have been of a reasonable age when he began his adventures, he must have been between eighty and ninety years old when this book is alleged to have been written. Gomara had overdone the matter in the superhuman achievements which he had ascribed to Cortéz, while Las Casas had proved the conqueror and his party to have been a gang of cruel monsters. Now, something had to be done to avert the odium that was beginning to attach to this crusade against the enemies of the Church. In Spain, where a padlock was upon every man's mouth, and where each one buried his suspicions in the most secret recesses of his heart, and trembled lest, even in his dreams, a thought of impiety might reach the ear of a familiar, history could always be made to conform to the interests of the Church.

* *Bernal Diaz*, vol. i. p. 207.

Since the records of the Spanish Inquisition have become the property of the public, and the manner in which the facts of history were trifled with is now understood, it is a question more easily asked than answered, Who wrote such and such a book?

Who, then, wrote the history of Bernal Diaz? We have seen that it cuts down the monstrous exaggerations of Cortéz more than a half, yet we shall see that the statements of Diaz are still incredible. It is a very religious book, as the Spaniards understand the word religion, and reflects great credit on the Church. But, with the slight evidence we have presented, no one would charge the work with being altogether a fiction, and Bernal Diaz a myth. All that can be said is, that we are left in that state of uncertainty in which every one finds himself who looks into a record that was within the control of the Inquisitorial censors.

Our stage-ride has been forgotten in discussing historical questions; and while we have been dwelling upon Cortéz and Bernal Diaz, we have crossed the plain, and been climbing the heights of Rio Frio, and now we begin to catch glances of the valley and of the city of Mexico—a city and valley so renowned in history and tradition, that it seems more like a city of the Old World than a town in the interior of the continent that Columbus discovered. Truly it is an old city. It was an old city before Columbus was born—an old city in a new world. It is one of the links that binds the present age to ages long past and almost forgotten—a city where the present and the past are strangely mingled together. In its streets are "penitents," wandering, in sackcloth and sandals, with a downcast look and a rope for self-castigation, among soldiers in new French uniforms and ladies in the latest Paris fashions. This is not the time for a favorable view of the valley from this point. To see it in its full glory, we must look upon it at sunrise.

CHAPTER XII.

Acapulco.—The Advantages of a Western Voyage to India.—The great annual Fair of Acapulco.—The Village and Harbor of Acapulco.—The War of Santa Anna and Alvarez.—The Retreat.—Traveling alone and unarmed.—The Peregrino Pass.—Quiricua and Cretinism.—Chilpanzingo.—An ill-clad Judge.—Iguala.—Alpayaca.—Cuarnavaca.

In order to complete the picture of life in the interior, let us now make a journey in another direction—from Acapulco northward to the city of Mexico—the route that the East India trade used to follow. But, first of all, let us discourse a little time about this port of Acapulco, once so famous upon the South Seas. It was not discovered when Cortéz built, in Colima, the vessels that went to search for a northwest passage; but when they had returned from their fruitless search, they anchored in the mountain-girt harbor of Acapulco. The discoveries of the celebrated navigator, Magellan, fixed the commercial character and importance of this sea-port. He had sailed through the straits that bear his name, and coasted northwardly as far as the trades. And from thence he bore away to the Spice Islands, discovering on the voyage the Philippine Islands, where the city of Manilla was founded. By this voyage he demonstrated that the advantages of a route across the Pacific were so superior to a voyage around Cape Horn, as to justify the expense of a land transit from Acapulco to Vera Cruz, and reshipment to Spain. Now that the Panama Railroad is made, this demonstration may prove advantageous to other nations.

The practical advantage of this discovery was the es-

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tablishment of the annual Manilla galleon, in which was sent out 1,000,000 silver dollars to purchase Oriental products for the consumption of Spain and all her American colonies. In this galleon sailed the friars that went forth to the spiritual conquest of India. In it sailed Spanish soldiers, who followed hard after the priests, to add the temporal to the spiritual subjugation of Oriental empires. To this harbor the galleon returned, freighted with the rich merchandise of China, Japan, and the Spice Islands. When the arrival of the galleon was announced, traders hastened from every quarter of New Spain to attend the annual fair. Little vessels from down the coast came to get their share of the mammoth cargo. The king's officers came to look after the royal revenue; and caravans of mules were summoned to transport the Spanish portion of the freight to Vera Cruz. Thus, for a short time, the population of this village was swollen, from 4000 to 9000, which fell off again when the galleon took her departure.

Such was the commercial condition of the town of Acapulco down to the time of the independence. From this time it was lost to commerce, until it was made a half-way house on the voyage to California. The town lies upon the narrow intervale between the hills and the harbor. It is built of the frailest material, and is destroyed about once in ten years by an earthquake.

The castle of San Diego stands upon the high bank, and, though commanding the entrance to the harbor, is itself commanded by the surrounding high lands, and has so often been taken by assault during the last thirty years as to be considered untenable. The harbor appears like a nest scooped out of the mountains, into and out of which the tide ebbs and flows through a double channel riven by an earthquake in the solid rock. Tradition says it once had another entrance, but that an

earthquake closed it up and opened the present channel. There is still another opening in the sharp mountain ridge that incloses it from the sea, but this opening, dug by the labor of man, at a point opposite the entrance of the harbor, was to let the cool sea-breeze in upon one of the hottest and most unhealthy places upon the continent. Such, in substance, is and was the little city of Acapulco, the seat and focus of the Oriental commerce of New Spain and of all the Spanish empire.

Santa Anna and Alvarez are the only remaining insurrectionary chiefs in Mexico. When I was last in the capital, Santa Anna was reigning supreme in the viceroyal palace, and Alvarez was supreme at Iztla, the capital of the Department of Guerrero, of which Acapulco is the sea-port town. The two chiefs had been long hostile to each other, but a gold mine, discovered upon the bank of the River Mescala, was "the straw that broke the camel's back." Alvarez had not been consulted in the disposition made of it. Santa Anna felt himself powerful in his newly-equipped army of 23,000 men, the finest army that had ever been seen in Mexico—an army which he was maintaining at a daily cost of $23,000. Alvarez was equally strong in his mountain fastnesses, in the affections of the *Pintos*, or "Spotted People," and, above all, in the poverty of his country. Santa Anna took the initiative by sending 2000 men to garrison Acapulco, and Alvarez committed the first open hostility, by closing the passes against them. Then the campaign began. Santa Anna traveled at the head of his grand army. During his unobstructed march to Acapulco there occurred a great many victories, for victories are indigenous products of Mexico. The siege of the castle of San Diego de Acapulco was the first of the long list of unsuccessful sieges that distinguished the year 1854. The besiegers dared not risk an assault,

and they had not sufficient material for conducting a regular siege. For some weeks the opposing forces remained looking at each other, while almost the only blood spilled was by the clouds of musquitoes that hovered over the camp of the grand army, and by the swarms of fleas that infested the castle. It might well be called a bloody war, for few escaped without bearing the scars of wounds and bloodletting.

While the besieging army was itself thus almost devoured, and had devoured all the eatables of the Pintos, symptoms of rebellion showed themselves at Mexico, to suppress which required the presence of Santa Anna. The generals of his army thought that they also might render more important services to the country in the streets of Mexico than in this inglorious war with bloody insects! A retreat was therefore sounded, and the country of the Pintos was evacuated. Thereupon rushed forth the little garrison from the clutches of the devouring insects, and issued a heroic proclamation, which was enough to frighten a whole army.

It is time to commence my itinerary across the mountains northward to the city of Mexico. My journey was by the same mule-path that Oriental merchants have climbed for centuries, as is shown by the vestiges of that strange race of which Humboldt speaks—an intermixture of Manillamen and Chinamen with the native race.

My traveling companion, who had a pistol, left me and went back at the first *venta*, or station-house, four leagues from Acapulco. At Lemones, the second station-house, four leagues farther, I passed the night sleeping upon a table in the veranda. This is the common lodging-place for solitary travelers in Mexico. Here I formed my first acquaintance with the *venta* pig, who considers himself the peculiar friend of the traveling

public. All the advances made by my new acquaintance at this first interview were occasional tugs at the blanket during the night, and divers unsuccessful attempts to turn the table over. At Alta, two stages farther on, the pig ensconced himself on a mat with the children, while he gave me no farther annoyance than an occasional visit, and thrusting of his nose into the hammock where I slept.

It was still dark when I left Alta in order to clear the Peregrino Pass and reach Tierra Colorado that day. In a few hours I gained the top of the pass, and sat down to take a survey of the zigzag way up which my old horse had climbed, and of the extensive region of hill and mountain country before me. It is difficult to believe that over this slight mule-path all the Spanish commerce of India has passed, and cargoes of silver dollars, amounting to hundreds of millions, during a period of three hundred years. Over this pass armies have continued to advance and to retreat with one uniform result: if the army is a large one, it is starved out of the country; if it is a small one, it is destroyed. Hunger devours the large armies; the Pintos devour the little ones. All around was now as quiet and solitary as the grave. There were no signs to indicate that this spot had been the scene of so much life and contention. The prospect was a delightful one, and I could have enjoyed it much longer had I not been assailed by that common enemy, that has assailed every general and colonel that has crossed this pass—an empty stomach; so that I and my old horse did our very best to reach the ford of the Papagalla, where there was a presumptive possibility that eatables might be found. I found entertainment for beast at the ford, but no food for his rider until we reached Tierra Colorado.

Here prevails not only that harmless cutaneous affec-

tion, the *Quiricua*, which causes people to appear spotted or painted (*Pintos*), but also *Cretinism*, the much more formidable disease so prevalent among the mountains of Switzerland.

This town is also remembered as the scene of a bloody battle. General Garay, who had lost his way the day before, had here come up, and we jogged along together; but as a Mexican general and escort are a doubtful protection to an unarmed man, if there is any real danger on the road, a prudent traveler will shake them off and travel on alone.

We passed Buena Vista, the fine sugar estate of M. Comonfort, and Aquaguisotla, and slept at Mazatlan, and the next day arrived at the famous city of Chilpanzingo, or City of the Bravos, the centre and focus of the insurrection in the southern provinces. Here, in the public square or plaza, in front of a church built by Cortéz, there was a grand bull-fight, or rather ox-fight, in which great efforts were made to infuse some life into a dozen stupid cattle. These efforts were attended with very indifferent success. A deep *barranca* extends to the Mescala, the largest river in Southern Mexico, across which we passed on a raft of gourds, propelled by two naked Indians, who swam across, each holding in his right hand a corner of the raft.

The next night, after dark, I arrived at a little village, and turned into an open caravansary. The old man of the establishment was very kind, and offered me a mat to lie on, but he had no corn for my horse. After making some inquiries that were a little unpleasant for a man who was traveling without a passport to answer, he said he would procure for me some corn from the alcalde. This village magistrate, who, in the absence of the "Judge of First Instance," is *ex officio* a judge, was an enormous negro, over six feet in height, whose

dignity was not certainly dependent upon his official robes, for a single napkin constituted his whole apparel. He sat upon an ox-skin, which did duty for the wool-sack—the very personification of the majesty of the law, with curled wig, and hide as black as the gown of the Lord Chief Justice, with the advantage that both were natural. This was the second negro I had yet seen in the country. The other held a commission as captain in the army, and was in the escort of General Garay.

I had a hard day's ride to reach the city of Iguala in time to witness the celebration of the independence, which was proclaimed here in 1821. The celebration, for the most part, consisted in eating and drinking from booths placed around the central square of the town. As I had little time to spare, I hurried on, and soon came to the Puente de Iztla, the carriage-road, that is finished thus far southward from the city of Mexico.

I started early next morning upon my journey. During the greater part of the day the road led through a continuous corn-field, and toward evening we came to the pretty Indian village of Alpayuca, so neat and well ordered that it might have passed for one of the missionary Indian villages of our northern Indians, were it not for the fine old Catholic church, which must have cost in its construction, centuries ago, fifty times the value of the present village, without including the cost of the bronze railing, brought from China in the prosperous days of the Manilla Company.

Not stopping to examine the ruins of great antiquity near this place, I rode on six leagues farther, when I arrived at the venerable city of Cuarnavaca, the place selected by Cortéz as the finest spot in all New Spain. This was bestowed upon him, at his own request, by the Emperor Charles V. as a residence. It merits to this day the distinction that has been given to it as one

of the finest spots on earth. It stands close under the shadow of the huge mountains that shield it from the northern blast, and it is at the same time protected from the extreme heat of the tropics by its elevation of 3000 feet. The immense church edifices here proclaim the munificence of Cortéz, while the garden of Laborde, open to the world, shows with what elegant taste he squandered his three several fortunes accumulated in mining. The combination of a fine day in a voluptuous climate, the beautiful scenery, and the happy faces of the people celebrating New Year's day in the shade of the orange-trees, made an impression upon a traveler not easily forgotten.

I was too near the city of Mexico to remain long here, and I rode on, up the zigzag way that leads over the mountain rim of the Valley of Mexico. I was not fortunate enough to accomplish the journey from city to city in a single day, and, from necessity, had to pass the night at the half-way house, upon the summit of the mountain, 10,000 feet above the sea. A poor Hungarian, who had been detained here like myself, came and laid his blankets with mine, and then we lay down, and chattered and shivered together until the morning. Such a night as this detracts somewhat from the enjoyments of this otherwise pleasant journey; but when I got a morning view of the valley and city of Mexico from the Cross of the "Marquis of the Valley," the sufferings of the chilly night were soon forgotten.

CHAPTER XIII.

California.—Pearl Fisheries.—Missions.—Indian Marriages.—Villages.—Precious Metals.—The Conquest of California compared with that of Mexico.—Upper California under the Spaniards.—Mexican Conquest of California in 1825.—The March.—The Conquest.—California under the Mexicans.—American Conquest.—Sinews of foreign Wars.—A Protestant and religious War.—Early Settlers compared.—Mexico in the Heyday of Prosperity.—Rich Costume of the Women.—Superstitious Worship.—When I first saw California.—Lawyers without Laws. — A primitive Court. — A Territorial Judge in San Francisco.—Mistaken Philanthropy.—Mexican Side of the Picture.—Great Alms.—City of Mexico overwhelmed by a Water-spout.—The Superiority of Californians.

I CAN not enter the valley of Mexico, and there discuss the various subjects that present themselves, without first gathering from California the data that will elucidate the condition of a country abounding in precious metals.

There is a striking dissimilarity between the two Californias. The American State of California is as celebrated for its fertility as for its mineral wealth. Peninsular California, on the other hand, is not distinguished for its minerals, nor remarkable for its fertility. With the sea washing it on either side, it is a country of drought and barrenness. It is like a neutral ground between the two rainy seasons. To the north of it, the winter is the season of abundant rains, with dry summers. To the south of it, the summer rains are heavy and continuous, without any showers in winter. Thus, lying between the opposite climates, it rarely enjoys the refreshing rains of either. Its back-bone is not a continuation of the rich Sierra Nevada, but of the coast range, which is

poor in minerals. The Mexican estimates set down the population as amounting to 12,000,* but an American, who has carefully examined the country, going down the whole length of the peninsula on the one side, and returning by the other, fixes it at 4000. The inhabitants are an imbecile race of mixed bloods and Indians, dwelling in the few small villages which the country contains, and upon the ranchos and haciendas.

Cattle thrive where water is to be found, and many of the natives are excellent herdsmen. Fish are abundant, but the Californians lack the necessary energy to become successful fishermen upon a large scale. The pearl fisheries have for centuries brought strangers to this shore of the Gulf, and many of the inhabitants have served as divers with success. The production of pearls in the Sea of Cortéz, or Gulf of California, has been so great during the last three centuries, that Mexico has become the greatest country for pearls yet known. Every female above the rank of a peasant must have at least one pearl to ornament the pin that fastens her shawl or mantilla upon the top of her head. Most of these pearls are of small value, on account of their imperfection in shape or color; but their abundance is one of the first things that strike a stranger on entering Mexico. With a change of fashions, the foreign demand for pearls fell off so much that, for the last half century, these fisheries have been almost discontinued; but with the reviving demand for pearls, the fisheries have again risen to importance. For a more detailed account of these pearl-fisheries, I must refer to the following note.†

* *Collección de Léyes*, p. 180.

† "The whole Pacific coast produces pearls, but the most extensive pearl-fisheries, at the present time, are in the Gulf of California, where, among an inexhaustible supply of little pearls, there are produced some of the very finest quality. The pearls of the Countess de Regla, those of the Marquesa de Gaudalupe, and Madame Velasco, are from these

In the year 1600 the Jesuits first undertook the establishment of a mission at Loretto, on the Gulf coast,

fisheries, and are remarkable for their great size and value. The great pearl presented to General Victoria, while he was President, was from the same locality." (WARD, vol. ii. p. 293.)

"The pearls of this gulf are considered of excellent water, but their rather irregular figure somewhat reduces their value. "The manner of obtaining pearls is not without interest. The vessels employed in the fisheries are from fifteen to thirty tons burden. They are usually fitted out by private individuals. The armador or owner commands them. Crews are shipped to work them, and from forty to fifty Indians, called Busos, to dive for the oyster. A stock of provisions and spirits, a small sum of money to advance the people during the cruise, a limited supply of calaboose furniture, a sufficient number of hammocks to sleep in, and a quantity of ballast, constitute nearly all the cargo outward bound.

"Thus arranged, they sail into the Gulf; and, having arrived at the oyster banks, cast anchor and commence business. The divers are first called to duty. They plunge to the bottom in four or five fathom water, dig up with sharpened sticks as many oysters as they are able, rise to the surface, and deposit them in sacks hung to receive them at the vessel's side. And thus they continue to do till the sacks are filled, or the hours allotted to this part of the labor are ended.

"When the diving of the day is done, all come on board and place themselves in a circle around the armador, who divides what they have obtained in the following manner: two oysters for himself, the same number for the Busos, or divers, and one for the government. This division having been concluded, they next proceed, without moving from their places, to open the oysters which have fallen to the lot of the armador. During this operation, that dignitary has to watch the Busos with the greatest scrutiny, to prevent them from swallowing the pearls with the oysters, a trick which they perform with so much dexterity as to almost defy detection, and by means of which they often manage to secrete the most valuable pearls.

"The government portion is next opened with the same precautions, and taken into possession by the armador. And, last of all, the Busos open theirs, and sell them to the armador in liquidation of debts incurred for their outfits, or of moneys advanced during the voyage. They usually reserve a few to sell to dealers on shore, who always accompany these expeditions with spirituous liquors, chocolate, sugar, cigars, and other articles of which Indian divers are especially fond. Since the Mexicans obtained their independence, another mode of division has been adopted. Every time the Busos come up, the largest oyster which he has obtained is taken by the armador, and laid aside for the use of the Virgin Mary. The rest are thrown in a pile; and, when the day's diving is ended, eight oysters are laid out for the armador, eight for the Busos, and two for the government.

which has ever since been the capital of the Peninsula. From the time of their first establishment here down to the time of the expulsion of the Jesuits from all the dominions of Spain, in 1767, they continued to cultivate this field, though it proved more than a match for their wonted perseverance. In a few places, the soil was made to yield its increase by the skillful application of the waters that sprung up among the mountains and rocks. Wherever irrigation was possible at small expense, there an oasis made its appearance, which was in striking contrast to the general barrenness that prevailed.

The manner in which conversions were effected by the Spanish priests may seem a little strange to the "voluntaries" of our day. The idea of running down a convert with dogs may seem to be rather an original method of proselyting, and has been severely commented upon by Forbes, and other Americans who have visited the Missions. But then such men should bear in mind that Catholics are not voluntaries, and never rely upon persuasion to make converts when they have the power to use a stronger argument. If this same class of missionaries used dogs to convert the Waldenses in Italy, there is a greater reason for using them among the half-brutish Indians of California. With such a race, moral suasion has no force; and to adduce arguments to convince a man whose only rule of action is the gratification of his sensual appetites, would be labor thrown away.

"In the year 1831, one vessel with seventy Busos, another with fifty, and two with thirty each, and two boats with ten each, from the coast of Sonora, engaged in this fishery. The one brought in forty ounces of pearls, valued at $6500; another, twenty-one ounces, valued at $3000; another, twelve ounces, valued at $2000, and the two boats a proportionate quantity. There were, in the same season, ten or twelve other vessels, from other parts, employed in the same trade, which, if equally successful, swelled the value of pearls taken in that year to the sum of more than forty thousand dollars."—FARNHAM'S *Scenes in the Pacific*, p. 307.

The good fathers took a more sensible view of the case. Having once obtained the consent of an Indian to receive Christian baptism, they took good care that he should not fall back from his profession, but retained him a prisoner of the cross. They used as much mildness as is compatible with their system, and only compelled their converts to labor as much as was necessary to the success of the mission, the rest of the time being devoted to their spiritual edification; that is, they were employed in repeating Latin prayers and a Spanish catechism, after an old Indian who acted as prompter. Sometimes it was necessary to allow the Indians to go abroad for a time, but then their return was provided for by retaining the squaws and papooses as hostages, in the same manner as they provided for the return of the plantation bulls, by shutting up the cows and calves in the *corral.*

The system pursued by the Jesuits, and, after their expulsion, by the Dominicans, was to treat the Indians as though they were half human and the other half bestial. Abstractly considered, this was very wrong; but it was practically the only system of treatment that gave any promise of improving their condition. Though in many respects they were treated as slaves, yet the missionaries had generally at heart the best interests of the Indians. With them it was a settled rule, that when an Indian was to be married, his kindred should be carefully inquired after, and that among them he was to marry, or not at all; for long experience had taught the fathers that certain diseases, hereditary among them, were checked by each marrying into his own clan, while they were aggravated by intermarriage with a stranger.

We may sum up the whole story of the combined missionary and governmental efforts at colonization in Lower Peninsular California, during a period of two hundred and fifty years, by saying that they jointly succeeded

in establishing a poverty-stricken village of mud huts, called San Josef, at Cape San Lucas, where the Manilla galleon, on its voyage to Acapulco, could procure a supply of fresh vegetables to stay the ravages of the scurvy among its crew. They also established a less important village at La Paz, which, with Loretto, and divers small hamlets and ranchos, constitutes all there is of this parched peninsula.

Upper California comes to my aid in illustration of the early condition of Mexico, for, without this assistance, many phenomena that are witnessed in Mexico would be inexplicable. The effects of sudden wealth, the great accumulations of precious metals in few hands, the gross immoralities to which such a state of things gives rise, the almost fabulous state of society that arises when, by delays in its export, the accumulations become burdensome to the possessors, are no longer novelties in our day, and they now serve to illustrate the romance of the history of other times.

When, in the year 1847, a party of American settlers and trappers hoisted the bear-flag in Upper California, their situation was strikingly similar to that of Cortéz and his party. Numbers were about equal in each case. The Territory of California was equal to the whole empire of Montezuma. The hunters and trappers had a more formidable enemy to contend with than Cortéz had; but they proved themselves more than a match for all antagonists. Like Cortéz, they found numerous villages of mud huts and a country governed by priests, but immensely superior in civilization and in arms to the Aztecs.

In 1776, the monks of the angelic order of San Francis had established missions along the coast. Adopting in this fertile country the practice of enforcing the labor of the Indians, the missions became vast grazing farms, where the priest, like the patriarchs of old, was the spir-

itual and temporal head of the establishment, and had flocks and herds innumerable. Villages (*pueblos*) had been established by the aid of the royal government, and mud forts (*presidios*) were founded as a protection to both mission and pueblo; and ranges (*ranchos*) for cattle were granted to individuals.

Such was California when it submitted to the "Plan of Iguala." It was reported to have had 75,000 Indians in connection with its missions, and a large white and mixed population. But, according to our custom, we must deduct two thirds from all Spanish enumerations, and estimate the population of every class at only 25,000 at most.

The priests of the missions had quietly acquiesced in the usurpation of Iturbide, and acknowledged his empire; but when Santa Anna proclaimed a republic, they were struck with horror. The idea of conferring civil rights upon Indians was monstrous. The very existence of the missions depended on keeping these poor creatures in servitude. And as for republicanism, that was incompatible with the government of the Church; and, as good Catholics and priests, they solemnly protested against it. Had these missionaries been as poor as the apostles, they probably would not have been disturbed for their want of republicanism. But their wealth proved their ruin, and the ruin of Upper California.

The new republic was at peace, and the surplus soldiery had to be got rid of. It was not safe to disband them at home, where they might take to the roads and become successful robbers; but 1500 of the worst were selected for a distant expedition—the conquest of the far-off territory of California. And then a general was found who was in all respects worthy of his soldiery. He was pre-eminently the greatest coward in the Mexican army—so great a coward, that he subsequently, with-

out striking a blow, surrendered a fort, with a garrison of 500 men, unconditionally, to a party of 50 foreigners.

Such was the great General Echandrea, the Mexican conqueror of California; and such was the army that he led to the conquest of unarmed priests and an unarmed province. It was a perilous expedition—perilous, not to the soldiers, but to the villagers upon their route. All dreaded their approach and rejoiced at their departure, for their march through their own country was a continued triumph, if one may judge from the amount of plunder they took from their friends upon the road. It was an expedition that Falstaff would have rejoiced to command, and his regiment would have distinguished themselves in such a war. Dry and dusty were the desert plains over which they marched, and dry and dusty were the throats of the army, for *cigaritos* were scarce, and *muscal* could seldom be found. But the toils of the long marches were relieved by frequent *fandangoes*, for the wives that followed the expedition equaled the men in numbers and courage.

This long journey, and these days of perilous marching and nights of dancing, at length came to an end by their arrival at the enemy's frontier—the frontier of California, which, to their joy, they found unguarded; nor was there any found to dispute their passage or "to make them afraid;" for, had there been fifty resolute persons to oppose them, this valiant army would have absconded, and California would have remained an appanage of the crown of Spain. But Providence had ordered it otherwise; and this horde of vagabonds (*leperos*) came rushing on, with their wives and children, until they reached the cattle-yards (*corrals*), and then was displayed their valor and their capacity for beef, and in the name of "God and Liberty" they gratified their appetite for plunder. The priests, on their part, stood up

manfully, and witnessed a good confession. They refused to accept this phantom of liberty which a party of vagabonds brought to them. The conquerors, however, could afford to be magnanimous in the midst of so much good eating, and no vengeance was inflicted upon unarmed men. But when the prefect of the missions was shipped off to Manilla, the war was at an end, for there was no means of defense, or, rather, it was changed from a war against priests to one against the cattle.

Thus was California conquered and annexed to the United States of Mexico in the year 1825, and the laws and constitution of that republic extended over it. But it is an abuse of words to say that any law existed from that time onward. The confusion produced by the irruption of this horde of vagabonds continued uninterrupted, and it involved, in one chaotic mass, law, order, and every public and private right. The history of the country is inexplicable, and its public archives are a mass of such gross irregularities, and show such a total disregard of all law, that they are little better than the Sibylline leaves.

The party that raised the "bear flag" met with no opposition. The party that landed from the shipping, and took possession of Monterey and San Francisco, were alike successful. But when a small party of American soldiers, under General Kearney, entered the country from the west, the *rancheros* took the alarm, and rushed forth on their fleet horses to defend their private property from spoliation, for they had no idea of regular soldiers disconnected from robbery and cattle-stealing! The Californians fought bravely, and hemmed in the little army of Americans until they were in a suffering condition for provisions, and until the dreaded hunters and trappers, and draughts from the shipping, routed the herdsmen and released the beleaguered force. This is

all there was that looked like war in the American acquisition of this most valuable territory.

Not only was there this similarity in respect to the inadequate means by which Mexico and California were acquired, but there is also a striking similarity in the fact of the immediate discovery of inexhaustible mines of precious metals, that gave importance to an otherwise comparatively insignificant conquest. Though so many centuries apart, each produced the same effect upon the political affairs of nations by suddenly furnishing the world with an abundant supply of the precious metals. The mines of Mexico, with some small supplies from South America, furnished the sinews of those religious wars that desolated Europe after the Reformation, and enabled Spain to maintain her vast armaments in the Spanish peninsula, and in her Italian kingdoms and principalities, and in her Belgian provinces. Spain was able to subsidize the armies of the Catholic League in France, and the forces of the Catholic Princes of Germany, and to turn back the tide of the Protestant Reformation after it had entered Italy, overrun Navarre, and reached her own frontier. The gold of California and Australia has furnished England the sinews by which she has set on foot armies, and subsidized nations in the present crusade against Russia.

At the time of the Reformation, all the precious metals were poured into the lap of a fanatical Catholic government; now they are in Protestant hands, and all, at last, find their resting-place, even those of Mexico, in the London market; while out of English Protestantism has our republic arisen, which is still united to her by a common language, a common religion, and commercial relations, so that the London market regulates the value of our stocks and the price of the food we eat. But our common Protestantism is not the Protestantism of the

Reformation: that was the Protestantism of princes, and every where rested for support upon state patronage, the people, in that epoch, having no political existence. Protestantism was then a state institution, and soon lost its vitality in such an unnatural alliance. The Protestantism of our day is the Protestantism of dissent, which rejects state support, yet has shown itself more powerful than governments. It has restored peace to Ireland, and made its proselytes there by tens of thousands after the last British regiment was withdrawn. It has rent in twain the Church of Scotland, and is fast revolutionizing the Church of England, by driving to Rome those who prefer superstition to democracy, while it draws the remainder of the nation to itself. In the United States it is the ruling power, though it has here no political authority. It has penetrated the most obscure hamlets of France and Spain, and made thousands of converts in Italy itself. And where its preachers could not penetrate, there the written Word has found its way.

The letters of Cortéz show that he, like his master, was above the superstitions of the Spanish race; yet both, skillful diplomatists, knew well how to avail themselves of the superstitions of others. The early Spanish adventurers to Mexico were a good illustration of the doctrine of total depravity, and the priests, that held them in leading-strings, were as depraved as themselves. "Like priests, like people." Our first settlers in California had learned self-government and self-control in the school of Protestantism; and when they took possession of that part of the country beyond the limit of Spanish settlements, where there were no laws and no written code, they were a law unto themselves, and the Spanish Americans that gathered about them found more perfect protection to life and property than they had ever before enjoyed. The Spanish adventurers at

Mexico lavished the wealth which they had acquired by the forced labor of the Indians in the mines upon priests and monks, who amused them with lying miracles. They also gave money as an atonement for the criminal lives they led, and to shield themselves from the vengeance of the Inquisition, when they were suspected of being rich. The religion of the Californians was a simple veneration for the truths of Scripture. In some it amounted to devotion, but it was devotion sanctioned by reason and the understanding. They all alike despised superstition and abhorred despotism. In conclusion, I may add, that, had such a race of men as I saw in the mountains and villages of California at an early period of its settlement existed at the time of the conquest of Mexico, they would have revolutionized the world.

We have heard much of the immorality, excessive extravagance and luxury of the cities of California; but the following picture of the state of the city of Mexico in the heyday of its prosperity, five years before it was destroyed by an inundation, is from the black-letter volume of Thomas Gage, of which I have already availed myself.

"Almost all Mexico is now built with very fair and spacious houses, with gardens of recreation. The streets are very broad; in the narrowest of them three coaches may go, and in the broadest of them six may go in the breadth of them, which makes the city seem a great deal bigger than it is. In my time it was thought to be of between thirty and forty thousand inhabitants, Spaniards, who are so proud and rich, that half the city was judged to keep coaches; for it was a most credible report that in Mexico there were about 15,000 coaches."

"It is a by-word that at Mexico there are four things fair; that is to say, the women, the apparel, the horses, and the streets. But to this I may add the beauty of

some of the coaches of the gentry, which do exceed in cost the best of the court of Madrid, and other parts of Christendom, for they spare no silver, nor gold, nor precious stones, nor cloth of gold, nor the best silks from China, to enrich them; and to the gallantry of their horses the pride of some doth add the cost of bridles and shoes of silver. The streets of Christendom must not compare with those in breadth and cleanness, but especially in the riches of the shops which do adorn them. Above all, the goldsmith's shops and works are to be admired. The [East] Indians, and the people of China, that have been made Christians, and every year come thither, have perfected the Spaniards in that trade. There is in the cloister of the Dominicans a lamp hanging in the Church, with three hundred branches wrought in silver, to hold so many candles, besides a hundred little lamps for oil set in it, every one being made with several workmanship so exquisitely that it is valued to be worth four hundred thousand ducats; and with such like curious works are many streets made more rich and beautiful from the shops of goldsmiths.

"To the by-word touching the beauty of the women I must add the liberty they enjoy for gaming, which is such that the day and night is too short for them to end a *primera* when once it is begun; nay, gaming is so common to them, that they invite gentlemen to their houses for no other end. To myself it happened that, passing along the streets in company with a friar that came with me the year before from Spain, a gentlewoman of great birth, knowing us to be new-comers, from her window called unto us, and, after two or three slight questions concerning Spain, asked us if we would come in and play with her a game at *primera*. Both men and women are excessive in their apparel, using more silks than stuffs and cloth. Precious stones and pearls farther



MEXICAN COSTUMES.

much this vain ostentation. A hatband and rose made of diamonds in a gentleman's hat is common, and a hatband of pearls is ordinary in a tradesman; nay, a blackamore, or tawney young maid and slave, will make hard shift but she will be in fashion with her neck-chain and bracelets of pearls, and her ear-bobs of considerable jewels.

"Their clothing is a petticoat of silk or cloth, with many silver or golden laces, with a very double ribbon of some light color, with long silver or golden tags hanging down in front the whole length of their petticoat to the ground, and the like behind; their waistcoats made like bodies, with skirts, laced likewise with gold and silver, without sleeves, and a girdle about their waist of great price, stuck with pearls and knobs of gold. Their sleeves are broad and open at the end, of Holland or fine China linen, wrought, some with colored silks, some with silk and gold, some with silk and silver, hanging down almost to the ground; the locks of their heads are covered with some wrought quoif, and over it another of net-work of silk, bound with a fair silk, or silver, or golden ribbon, which crosses the upper part of their foreheads, and hath commonly worked out in letters some light and foolish love posie; their bare, black, and tawney breasts, are covered with bobs hanging from their chains of pearls. And when they go abroad, they use a white mantle of lawn or cambric, rounded with a broad lace, which some put over their heads, the breadth reaching only to their middles behind, that their girdle and ribbons may be seen, and the two ends before reaching to the ground almost; others cast their mantles only upon their shoulders; and swaggerers like to cast the one end over the left shoulder, while with their right arm they support the lower part of it, more like roaring boys than honest civil maids. Their shoes are high and of

many soles, the outside whereof of the profaner sort are plated over with a lift of silver, which is fastened with small nails with broad silver heads. Most of these are or have been slaves, though love have set them loose at liberty to enslave souls to sin and Satan; and for the looseness of their lives, and public scandals committed by them and the better sort of the Spaniards, I have heard them say often, who possessed more religion and fear of God, they verily thought God would destroy that city, and give up the country into the power of some other nation.

"And I doubt not but the flourishing of Mexico in coaches, horses, streets, women, and apparel, is very slippery, and will make those proud inhabitants slip and fall into the power and dominion of some other prince of this world, and hereafter, in the world to come, into the powerful hands of an angry Judge, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords, which Paul saith (Heb. x. 31) is a fearful thing. For this city doth not only flourish in the ways aforesaid, but also in the superstitious worshiping of God and the saints they exceed Rome itself, and all other places of Christendom. And it is a thing which I have very much and carefully observed in all my travels, both in Europe and America, that in those cities wherein there is most lewd licentiousness of life, there is also most cost in the temples, and most public superstitious worship of God and the saints."

So much for worthy Thomas Gage, and his estimate of the Mexicans of his day.

I arrived at San Francisco in the midst of the gold excitement. The town was crowded with rough-looking muscular men in red shirts, slouch hats, and trowsers over which were drawn high-topped boots. A Colt's revolver, a belt filled with gold, and an unshaven visage completed the *tout ensemble* of a crowd who were pur-

chasing supplies for their companions in the mines. They strode along, conscious that they belonged to the Anglo-Saxon race and the aristocracy of labor. As they turned into the temporary houses or booths which then constituted the town, or threaded their way among the piles of merchandise that encumbered the streets, the effeminate natives instinctively shrunk back, conscious of their own imbecility; the Spanish Americans were overawed by their presence; and even Sidney convicts thought it most profitable to turn their thoughts to honest labor.

The miner had his vices too as well as his virtues. If you will follow him as he opens right and left a crowd that surrounds a table heaped with lumps of gold and silver coin, you will see how carelessly he throws down a piece of metal, looking sharply into the eye of the cunning dealer of the monté cards. If he detects a false move, he cocks his weapon, and draws the gold back into his bag and strides away.

Such were the men who knew no fear, and dreaded no labor or fatigue, and who have made California in five short years a state more powerful than the Republic of Mexico.

In an interior town I was called to practice as an attorney. My first client was the driver of an ox-team, who was suing for extra services in addition to his regular wages of five hundred dollars a month and board (Doe *vs.* Pickett). My office was a space of four feet by six, partitioned off by two cotton sheets, in the corner of a canvas store. The ground was for a while the floor; yet I paid in advance the monthly rent of two ounces of gold, and never had occasion to regret the outlay. The heavy winter rains at length compelled my landlord to lay a floor of rough boards, which cost him seven hundred dollars for a thousand feet.

Before the establishment of the state government, there was a judiciary created by an autocratical edict of General Riley; and a pamphlet, extracted and translated from the Mexican Constitutional laws of 1836, constituted the *Corpus Juris Civilis* of the Territory of California. The remainder of the law was made up of the judge's ideas of equity, and of the law he had read before leaving home. Inartificial and rude as was this system, still it was wonderfully efficient; and it was well for the people of California that it was so, for an unparalleled immigration had brought with it an unparalleled amount of litigation.

With the daily occurring causes of litigation, crowds assembled at the school-house on the Plaza, where from morning to night sat a judge dispensing off-hand justice. In front of him sat three or four clerks conducting the business. The crowds of lawyers, litigants, and witnesses that surrounded the court were not idle spectators, but represented the ordinary accumulation of business for the day, which was to be disposed of before the adjournment of the court. Speedy justice was more desirable than exact justice, where labor was valued at a gold ounce a day; and none were more desirous of speed than the lawyers, whose prospects of compensation depended much upon the promptitude with which judgment was rendered.

The moving spirit of the whole scene, Judge A——, watched from behind the desk all that was said or done, seldom withdrawing his attention unless to administer an oath for the consideration of one dollar, or to sign an order for the consideration of two dollars. Sometimes he would change his position; but, whether warming his uncovered feet at the fire-place, or drawing on his boots, or replenishing his stock of tobacco, there was the same unalterable attention on his part. As soon as he

comprehended a case, his authoritative voice was heard, closing the discussion, and dictating to a clerk the exact number of dollars and cents for which he should enter up a judgment. And then another, and another case was called up, and submitted to this summary process, until about nine o'clock at night, when the day's work terminated. All orders asked for by a responsible attorney were granted *ex parte*, the judge remarking that if the order was not a proper one, the other party would soon appear, and then he could ascertain the real merits of the case. The grand feature of this court was the facility with which an injunction could be obtained, and the rapidity with which it could be set aside.

Crime was almost unknown until we got a state government and a code of laws, which, with misplaced philanthropy, had made the legal practice so easy upon criminals that a conviction was next to impossible. Then it was that crime stalked abroad in the face of day, and Sidney convicts plied their trade in San Francisco after it had become a city. Shops were entered and robbed in business hours; and by night, men were murdered in the streets; and thefts escaped punishment. Then it was that men, caught in the commission of crime, were hanged in the open streets, and combinations were formed for self-defense. But when a new Legislature gave efficiency to the laws, the community yielded a willing obedience to the magistrate. From an early day there had been "miners' courts," which, with their alcaldes, had conciliated differences. But when magistrates were elected, these courts disappeared. This was a change from bad to worse, for no condition is so deplorable as that of a people whose magistracy are powerless.

Such is a fair picture of California in its worst estate, when the worst and the best of all nations were there congregated, and kept in subjection by the law-abiding

spirit of an Anglo-Saxon immigration—a state of society in the first year of its existence, yet infinitely superior to that existing in the city of Mexico a hundred years after the discovery of the mines of Haxal and Pachuca. But we may complete the contrast by adding the more deplorable part of the picture which Friar Thomas Gage has drawn.

"It seems," says he, "that religion teaches that all wickedness is allowable, so that the churches and clergy flourish. Nay, while the purse is open to lasciviousness, if it be likewise open to enrich the temple walls and roofs, this is better than any holy water, or water to wash away the filth of the other. Rome is held to be the head of superstition; and what stately churches, chapels, and cloisters are in it! What fastings, what processions, what appearances of devotion! And, on the other side, what liberty, what profaneness, what whoredoms, nay, what sins of Sodom are committed in it, insomuch that it could be the saying of a friar to myself, while I was in it, that he verily thought there was no one city in the world wherein were more Atheists than in Rome. I might show this much in Madrid, Seville, Valladolid, and other famous cities in Spain and in Italy; in Milan, Genoa, and Naples; relating many instances of scandals committed in those places, and yet the temples are mightily enriched by those who have thought their alms a sufficient warrant to free them from hell and purgatory. But I must return to Mexico, which furnishes a thousand witnesses of this truth—sin and wickedness abounding in it—and yet no such people in the world toward the Church and clergy. In their lifetime they strive to excel one another in their gifts to the cloisters of nuns and friars, some erecting altars to their best-devoted saints, worth many thousand ducats, others presenting crowns of gold to the pictures of Mary, others

lamps, others golden chains, others building cloisters at their own charge, others repairing them, others, at their death, leaving to them two or three thousand ducats for an annual stipend.

"Among these great benefactors to the churches of that city, I should wrong my history if I should forget one that lived in my time, called Alonzo Cuellar, who was reported to have a closet in his house laid with bars of gold instead of brick; though indeed it was not so, but only reported for his abundant riches and store of bars of gold, which he had in one chest, standing in a closet distant from another, where he had a chest full of wedges of silver. This man alone built a nunnery for Franciscan nuns, which stood him in above 30,000 ducats, and left unto it, for the maintenance of the nuns, 2000 ducats yearly, with obligation of some masses to be said in the church every year for his soul after his decease. And yet this man's life was so scandalous, that commonly, in the night, with two servants, he would go round the city visiting such scandalous persons, whose attire before hath been described, carrying his beads in his hands, and at every house letting fall a bead, and tying a false knot, that when he came home in the morning, toward break of the day, he might number by his beads the uncivil stations he had walked and visited that night.

"Great alms and liberality toward religious houses in that city commonly are coupled with great and scandalous wickedness. They wallow in the bed of riches and wealth, and make their alms the coverlet to cover their loose and lascivious lives. From hence are the churches so fairly built and adorned. There are not above fifty churches and chapels, cloisters and nunneries, and parish churches in the city; but those that are there are the fairest that ever my eyes beheld, the roofs and beams being, in many of them, all daubed with gold, and many altars

with sundry marble pillars, and others with Brazil-wood stays standing one above another, with tabernacles for several saints, richly wrought with golden colors, so that twenty thousand ducats is a common price of many of them. These cause admiration in the common sort of people, and admiration brings on daily adoration in them to those glorious spectacles and images of saints; so Satan shows Christ all the glory of the kingdoms to entice him to admiration, and then he said, '*All these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me*' (Matthew, iv. 8, 9). The devil will give all the world to be adored.

"Besides these beautiful buildings, the inward riches belonging to the altars are infinite in price and value, such as copes, canopies, hangings, altar-cloths, candlesticks, jewels belonging to the saints, and crowns of gold and silver, and tabernacles of gold and crystal to carry about their sacrament [the Saviour of the world in the form of a wafer] in procession, all of which would mount to the worth of a reasonable mine of silver, and would be a rich prey for any nation that could make better use of wealth and riches. I will not speak much of the lives of the friars and nuns of this city, but only that they there enjoy more liberty than in Europe—where they have too much—and that surely the scandals committed by them do cry up to Heaven for vengeance, judgment, destruction.

"It is ordinary for the friars to visit their devoted nuns, and to spend whole days with them, hearing their music, feeding on their sweetmeats; and for this purpose they have many chambers, which they call *loquatories*, to talk in, with wooden bars between the nuns and them; and in these chambers are tables for the friars to dine at, and while they dine the nuns recreate them with their voices. Gentlemen and citizens give their daughters to

be brought up in these nunneries, where they are taught to make all sorts of conserves and preserves, all sorts of music, which is so exquisite in that city that I dare be bold to say that the people are drawn to churches more for the delight of the music than for any delight in the service of God. More, they teach these young children to act like players; and, to entice the people to the churches, they make these children act short dialogues in their choirs, richly attiring them with men and women's apparel, especially upon Midsummer's day and the eight days before their Christmas, which is so gallantly performed that many factious strifes and single combats have been, and some were in my time, for defending which of these nunneries most excelled in music and in the training up of children."

Such is a picture drawn by a candid writer of one of the most devout Catholic cities in the world, where licentiousness and papacy went hand in hand until they reached that extreme point of corruption, that, as in the case of Sodom, God overthrew the city by a judgment from heaven; not by fire and brimstone, but by a water-spout, which, in the space of the five years that it lay upon the town three feet deep, loosened the foundations of all buildings and impoverished the inhabitants. And when at length the earth opened and swallowed up these waters, the city had to be rebuilt. The misery and distress that this flood inflicted upon the lower orders of the inhabitants was great in the extreme.

It was on Sunday morning that the cause of the moral superiority of the American miners over those of Mexico was visible. Then the noise and bustle about my residence was hushed. The most immoral seemed to be overawed by a sense of respect for the religious opinions of others; and when the sound of a ship-bell, hung on the limb of a tree, was heard, all except the baser sort

repaired to the shade of an oak, so large and venerable that it might have shielded the whole household of Abraham while engaged in family worship. A portable seraphine gave forth a familiar tune, in which all joined in singing with a zest which is only realized by those whom it carries back in recollection to distant home. Then the voice of the preacher was heard invoking the blessing of God upon the assembled worshipers, and his pardon of their offenses; and then followed his exhortation to seek from God the pardon of their many sins; and as he, with heartfelt earnestness, "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come," many a stern-visaged miner trembled for his condition, and went away a better and a more honest man—ten thousand times more improved than if he had presented a crown of gold to the Virgin Mary.

We are now prepared to enter the valley of Mexico, and examine the objects that there present themselves.

CHAPTER XIV.

First Sight of the Valley of Mexico.—A Venice in a mountain Valley.—An Emperor waiting his Murderers.—Cortéz mowing down unarmed Indians.—A new kind of Piety.—Capture of an Emperor.—Torturing an Emperor to Death.—The Children paying the Penalty of their Fathers' Crimes.—The Aztecs and other Indians.—The Difference is in the Historians.—The Superstitions of the Indians.—The Valley of Mexico.—An American Survey of the Valley.—A topographical View.—The Ponds Chalco, Xochimulco, and Tezcuco were never Lakes.

MY first view of the Valley of Mexico was from the point where the Acapulco road passes the Cross of the "Marquis of the Valley." I had read with eagerness the History of the Conquest, and of the adventures of the noble *Conquistador*. Not a shadow of a doubt had then crossed my mind in regard to the truth of all that had been so elegantly written. Beautiful composition had supplied the place of evidence, and that practice of writing romances of history which the Spaniards had inherited from the Moors had completely captivated me, as it had thousands of others. The aspect of the valley was all that my fancy had painted it. The sun was in the right quarter to produce the greatest possible effect. The unnumbered pools of surface-water that abound in the valley appeared at that distance like so many lakelets supplied by crystal fountains, as each one reflected the bright sun from its mirror-like surface; these all were inclosed in the richest setting of nature's green.

It was such a scene as would justify the extravagant language which Spaniards have employed in describing it. While I recalled its traditional history, I was tempted to exclaim as a native would have done, and to give

credence to the fables of which this valley has been the scene. Here, as the story ran, amid floating gardens of rarest flowers and richest fruits, lay, in olden time, another Venice—a Venice in an inland mountain valley—a Venice upon whose Rialto never walked a Shylock with his money-bags; for in this market-place the most delicious fruits the world produces, the loveliest flowers, rich stuffs resplendent with Tyrian dyes, and princely mantles of feather-work, were bought with pretty shells, and such money as the sea produces. It was a Venice with its street of waters and its central basin, where jostled the gondolas of the Aztec nobles and the light canoes of birch bark among the vessels of commerce which came laden with slaves and other merchandise from the surrounding villages—a basin that disappeared the same day that the Indian empire fell.

This basin was the last vestige of Aztec dominion; and when there no longer was any safe shelter upon the land, Guatemozin retired to his canoe and took shelter here, and calmly waited till his time should come to be murdered. He could not flee. He could not capitulate, for he was an emperor. As he sat here waiting for death, what must have been his reflections! What thoughts did not the very boat he occupied call up! How often had it carried him out upon the lake to the floating gardens and volcanic islands, where he had witnessed so many times the gorgeous reflections of an evening sun upon the snow-capped Popocatapetl, in whose bowels "the god of fire" had his dwelling! And then the lake itself, how much it had perplexed his thoughts, that in one part its waters should be fresh, with islands teeming with the richest vegetation, and in another part salt and bitter, with utter barrenness resting upon its shores! How he used to meet his brother of Tezcuco in the after part of the day, to exchange congratulations

and talk over affairs of interest to both the royal families! Now all these pleasures were terminated forever. His brother of Tezcuco was in the ranks of his enemies, seeking his destruction.

Thus sat the emperor, surrounded by a numerous fleet of canoes, whose occupants were without hope of escape or strength to fight; but, with Indian stoicism, all sat waiting their inevitable doom from freebooters whom they had disappointed of their prey. As the emperor and his nobles sat here witnessing the destruction of their pumice-stone palaces and mud-built huts, and the filling up of their canals, they consoled themselves with the reflection that their gold and their wealth were all at the bottom of these canals, and that the Spaniards, in their hot haste to enjoy the spoils of the city, were unwittingly burying forever the prize for which they were contending. Such were the thoughts of these Aztecs as they sat in their canoes, longing for death to relieve them from agony of suspense, enduring all the torments of the extremest thirst, which they vainly sought to quench by draughts of the brackish water of the lake. They had not long to wait; for, by the express commands of Cortéz, his followers were mowing down unresisting citizens, because the emperor, over whom they had no control, would not surrender himself.

Who can stand for the first time upon the mountain rim that incloses this valley, and not have his thoughts carried back to some such scene as this? The recollection is not easily eradicated that the remnant of a once powerful tribe of Indians, partially emerged from barbarism, here received their death, in cold blood, at the hands of a party of white murderers. The good Archbishop Loranzana commends the piety of Cortéz in never neglecting to attend mass before going out to his daily work of slaughter. It was a pious act, no doubt, that on the

last morning of the siege he stopped and listened to a mass—that pantomime which set forth the death of the Redeemer of the world—preparatory to consummating the butchery of Indians incapable of resistance.

Garci Holguin, the master of a brigantine, or rather flat-boat, bolder than the rest, drove through the fleet of canoes that occupied the basin, until he encountered in the centre a canoe containing the person of the emperor, whom he made prisoner and brought to Cortéz, whereupon the slaughter ceased. [Compare Humboldt.]

Neither the horrid sight which the city presented, nor the fallen fortunes of a brave enemy, could move the soul of Cortéz. A brigand knows no remorse and feels no pity. Gold had been the object of his pious mission, and when he found not gold enough to satisfy the cravings of his gang, he soaked the fallen emperor's feet in oil, and then burned them at a slow fire, to extort from him a confession of the place of concealment of his supposed treasure; and when, in after years, he was tired of the burden of such a prisoner, he wantonly hanged him up by the heels to die in a distant forest.

In this very city where Cortéz tortured Guatemozin was a son of Cortéz, who inherited the spoils of his father's atrocities, put to the torture by one of the Vice-kings, while the children's children of the Conquistadors paid for the wealth they inherited in the terrible penalties inflicted upon them by the buccaneers, that ravaged their coasts for two hundred years. Have not the sins of the fathers been visited upon the children?

The Aztecs, their empire, and their city, have long since disappeared; their crimes, and the despotism which they exercised over the tribes they had conquered, are all forgotten in the terrible catastrophe that extinguished their national existence. Three hundred years of servitude in the indiscriminate mass of Indian serfs has blotted out

every feeling of nationality. A few vagabonds among them still claim royal descent, and, by virtue of their blood or their imposture, pretend to exercise, in obscure villages, an undefined jurisdiction over Indians as oppressed as themselves. But the characteristics of the North American Indians are still visible; they still exhibit the contradictory traits of Indian character—cruelty and kindness, shyness and self-possession; enduring the greatest trials without a murmur, and suffering oppression without complaint; delighting as much as their northern brethren in tawdry exhibitions, in traditions of the marvelous, they seem to carry hidden in their inmost soul an idea that the time will come when they may take vengeance of the despoilers of their race. They have the Indian's love of adventure and want of courage. They delight rather in a successful stratagem than in open hostility, and deem no act of treachery dishonorable by which they can gain an advantage. Still, they have less romance in their composition than the unenslaved northern Indians, into whose souls the iron of despotism has never entered.

The great difference between what is recorded of the North American Indian and the Aztec is owing less to any difference in themselves than to the character of the historians who have written of them. The northern writers were not carried away by the romance of Indian life; they were matter-of-fact men, and they drew only matter-of-fact pictures. Spanish historians, and all early Spanish writers upon New Spain, except the two brigands, Cortéz and Diaz, were priests. With them, truth was not an essential part of history. By the law of all countries, the Conquistadors had outlawed themselves by levying unlicensed war; but as they bore a painting of the Virgin Mary on one of their standards and the cross on the other, it would be impiety to place their conduct

in its true light. Las Casas was an exception, and endured persecution for speaking the truth. "He had powerful enemies," was all that his apologist dare say, "because he speak great truths." And if we add to this the sevenfold censorship already described, my reader will agree with me that it is absurd to place confidence in records over which the Inquisition exercised a surveillance.

The fabled Aztec empire has almost passed from the traditions of the Mexican Indians. The name of only one of their chiefs, Montezuma, remains among them, and this name is affixed to almost every thing that has an ancient look and is in a dilapidated condition. In my wanderings among them, I never rejected their proffers of rude hospitality, and I have listened with pleasure to their wild traditions. I soon found that, like other Indians, they draw from a supernatural "dream-world" the fortitude that enables them to bear without a murmur their hard lot in the present. They readily embraced the superstitions of the Spaniards, and rendered to the virgin of Gaudalupe the adoration they had formerly bestowed upon their own gods. Their conversion may be summed up in the words of Humboldt: "Dogma has not succeeded to dogma, but ceremony to ceremony. The natives know nothing of religion but the external forms of worship. Fond of whatever is connected with a prescribed order of ceremonies, they find in the Christian religion particular enjoyment. The festivals of the Church, the fire-works with which they are accompanied, the processions mingled with whimsical disguises, are a most fertile source of amusement to the lower Indians."

There has been a great deal of poetry and very little plain prose written about the valley of Mexico. At an early morning hour I stood upon the heights of Rio Frio; at another morning, as already said, at the Cross of the

Marquis; again, upon the highest peak of the Tepeyaca, behind Guadalupe, I saw a tropical morning sun disengage itself from the snowy mountains. From these three favored spots I have looked upon the valley, where dry land and pools of water seemed equally to compose the magnificent panorama. Immense mirrors of every conceivable shape and form were reflecting back the rays of the sun, while the green shores in which they were set enhanced the effect. The white walls, and domes, and spires of the distant city heightened the effect of a picture that can only be fully appreciated by those who have looked downward through the pure atmosphere of such a lofty position; but when I came down to the common level, the charm was broken. Instead of lakelets and crystal springs, I found only pools of surface-water which the rains had left; and the canals were but the ditches from which, on either side, the dirt had been taken to build the causeway through the marsh, and were now covered with a coat of green. These lakes have no outlet, and as evaporation only takes up pure water, all the animal, vegetable, and mineral matter that is carried in is left to stagnate and putrefy in the ponds and ditches.

A practical "man of the times," with more common sense than poetry in his composition, must grieve as he looks at the great advantages here possessed for drainage and irrigation which are unimproved. There is not a spot in the whole valley that is not capable of the most perfect drainage,* while basins have been formed by nature in the highest points, from which irrigation could be supplied to the whole valley; but decay and neglect—fitting types of the social condition of the people—every where exhibit themselves. Water stands in all the narrow canals or ditches that occupy the middle of the

* Report of M. L. Smith, Lieutenant of Topographical Engineers, United States Army.

streets, for the want of a proper sewer to draw it down to the level of the Tezcuco. Once a year the flags are taken off from the covered ditches, and the mud is dipped out, while a bundle of hay, tied to the tail of a dirt-cart, is daily dragged through the open ones.

I have spoken only of the lower division of this valley—the valley in which the city stands. If we consider the two partly separated valleys as one, the whole will constitute an oval basin 75 miles long from north to south, with an average width from east to west of 20 miles. Two thirds of the southern valley is a marsh, and might well be called the "Montezuma Marsh," it so strikingly resembles the marsh of that name in the State of New York, though the whole body of ponds and marshes of this valley contains much less water than its northern namesake. The stage-road from Vera Cruz crosses this marsh for fourteen miles, and has a great number of small stone bridges, beneath which the water runs with considerable current toward the north, on account of the difference of level between the southern fresh-water ponds and the lower salt-water ponds, as in the days of Cortéz. There are occasional dry spots, and now and then there is open water; but the greater portion is filled with marsh grass, and furnishes good feeding for the droves of cattle that daily frequent it for that purpose. The ancient village of Mexicalzingo, or "Little Mexico," the traditional home of the Aztecs before they built Mexico, is situated on one of the dry spots, slightly elevated above the level of the fresh water; and on another dry spot or island, six miles distant, stands the famous city of Mexico itself, resting on piles driven into a foundation of soft earth. The canal of Chalco commences at the northerly extremity of the Xochimulco, and, passing by Mexicalzingo and the floating gardens, continues along the eastern front of the city,

and empties itself into the salt (*tequisquite*) pond of Tezcuco, having received as a tributary the canal of Tacubaya, which passes along the southern boundary of the city.

The highest water of the valley of the city of Mexico is the pond of Chalco, in the extreme southeast, being $4\frac{8}{12}$ feet above the level of the Grand Plaza of the city, and 20 miles distant therefrom, and $11\frac{2}{12}$ feet above Tezcuco;* but its volume being small for the last 400 years, the slight impediments of long grass and a few Indian dikes have prevented any injury to the city by a too rapid flow to the northward. Xochimulco is the pond, or open space in the marsh, that extends from the Chalco to near Mexicalzingo. Tezcuco is the lowest water in the valley, being $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet below the Grand Plaza of the city.† It receives the surplus of the waters that have not already been evaporated in the other ponds. At this great elevation, 7500 feet, evaporation does its work rapidly all over the valley, but it is in Tezcuco that the residuum of the waters is deposited.

* Lieut. Smith's Report. † Ibid.

CHAPTER XV.

The two Valleys.—The Lake with a leaky Bottom.—The Water could not have been higher.—Nor could the Lagunas or Ponds have been much deeper.—The Brigantines only flat-bottomed Boats.—The Causeway Canals fix the size of the Brigantines.—The Street Canals.—Stagnant Water unfit for Canals.—The probable Dimensions of the City Canals.—Difficulties of disproving a Fiction.—A Dike or Levee.—The Canal of Huehuetoca.—The Map of Cortéz.—Wise Provision of Providence.—The Fiction about the numerous Cities in and about the Lake.

It may be well here to repeat that, strictly speaking, there are two valleys of Mexico—the upper northern valley, and the valley of the city of Mexico; the first extends in an oval form to the north of the hills of Tepeyaca, some sixty miles, and communicates with the plains of Otumba and Apam. In this valley are the two ponds, or *lagunas*, of Zumpango and San Cristobal, the highest waters of Mexico; and in it also is the half of the Tezcuco, which is the lowest laguna of the valleys. It is a country of fine farming lands, and was probably inhabited long before the time of the arrival of the Aztecs in the lower valley, as I infer from its proximity to the extensive ruins of Teotihuican, that have come down from a remote and highly-civilized antiquity.

The valley of the city of Mexico, which lies to the south of these hills, is also of an oval shape, but is not more than twenty miles in extent. The surface-water with which it is saturated is in part fresh, and in other parts *tequisquite;* that is, where the waters have a current, they are fresh; but where they remain from year to year discharging their volume only by evaporation, there

they become infused with the saline properties of the soil,* and all about them is marked with barrenness. If the process of evaporation was less intense than it is,† all vegetation would die from the extreme humidity of the soil; as the gardener's phrase is, it would rot. Even in the city of Mexico itself, a couple of feet of digging in its alluvial foundation brings you to the water-level in the dry season, and seventy or eighty yards of boring does not carry you beyond the perceptible influence of *tequisquite*.‡ The effects of this law of evaporation puzzled the Aztecs, who were, of course, ignorant of all philosophical principles, and could only account for the disappearance of the immense mass of water that fell in the valley in the wet season, upon the hypothesis that the Tezcuco had a leaky bottom, or that there was a hole in the lake—an idea that thousands in Mexico credit to the present day. This was the origin of that absurd story which Cortéz repeats in his letters, that this lake communicated with the sea, and had its daily tides.

There could not have been a much greater volume of water in this marshy valley in the time of Cortéz than at present, if the whole accumulations of each year were to be carried off by evaporation alone from so small a surface as is here presented for the sun to act upon. But as the volume of water is the turning-point in the

* There has been much speculation in regard to the origin of the saline properties of this water; but the Artesian borings going on while I was in Mexico, I think, sufficiently demonstrate that the earthy bottom of the valley, for hundreds of feet, contains an infusion of carbonate and muriate of soda.

† The atmosphere of Mexico is so intensely dry, that the hygrometer of Deluc frequently descends to 15°.—HUMBOLDT'S *Essai Politique*, vol. ii. p. 110.

‡ When the Artesian well, in process of construction near my residence, had reached a depth of seventy yards, the water that came up was slightly impregnated with this salt.

history or fable of the conquest, I must adduce the proofs and arguments that are at hand to establish this statement. The level of the water could not have been higher, it is clear, for in that case neither Mexico, Mexicalzingo, or Iztapalapan could have been inhabited.

Cortéz's account of deep waters has often been made plausible by adding the hypothesis that the accumulating mud of centuries has filled up the lakes, so that they now are only shallow ponds. But this by no means removes the difficulty, for then, as now, the waters of the southern laguna flowed into Tezcuco, conveying with them the infinitesimal infusion of *tequisquite* that had instilled itself into the Chalco. Had the volume of Chalco and Xochimulco been increased several feet, then the slight Indian barriers and the long grass would no longer have been able to retard the progress of the water till evaporation had diminished its quantity, but, precipitating itself in a mass into the Tezcuco, it would have overwhelmed the town of Tezcuco and all other villages upon the shores, and established an equilibrium of surface in the two ponds.

All the lagunas, canals, and ditches that have been described are navigated by small scows that draw but a few inches of water, which are the medium of an extensive internal commerce. Through the lagunas and canal of Chalco come from Cuatla all the supplies of the products of the hot country for the city and surrounding region. This commerce exceeds the whole foreign trade of the republic.* This kind of boat was probably introduced by Cortéz, and in this convenient form his thirteen brigantines were probably made; for, had his brigantines been of a larger draught of water, they could not have navigated canals intended only for Indian canoes. One of these vessels, when supplied with a sail, a can-

* *Comércio de Mexico*, 1852.

non, and a movable keel or side-board, would be a formidable auxiliary in an assault upon the city at the present day. And if one such scow was placed in the ditch on each side of the southern causeway, as Cortéz alleges, it would enable an assailing enemy to present just so much more front as the additional width of two boats would give him.

Writers have expressed their surprise at the existence of two navigable canals to each causeway, one on either side, as an immense expenditure of unnecessary labor. The explanation of this is found in the fact that in the construction of a pathway (for Cortéz says that it was only 30 feet in width) through wet and marshy ground, a broad ditch is ordinarily made on either side to obtain earth for the embankment, and to keep the water-level permanently below the top of the pathway. So it is, and so it must always have been at Mexico, in order to keep these foot-paths in traveling condition. In the dry season, which is the winter, these broad ditches are covered with floating islands of green "scum;" but in the rainy season, which is the summer, they may be navigated by the shallow Mexican scows. A pathway of earth thirty feet in width could not endure the winds and waves of a navigable lake, or the wear and "swash" of a canal twelve feet deep on either side; and the fact that Cortéz navigated the ditches in the rainy season establishes the insignificant size of his famous brigantines.

As the level of the surface of the land and the surface of the water at Mexicalzingo, at Mexico, and at the village Tezcuco, does not materially vary now from what it was in the time of Cortéz, if we can take for data the foundations of the churchs built by the Conquistadors at these several places, we shall have to look to another quarter for a supply of water for the city canals, which

were sufficiently capacious for canoe navigation. This supply we readily obtain by allowing the waters of the canals Tacubaya and Chalco to pass through the streets of the city in ditches sufficiently large for canoes, instead of passing along the south and east fronts outside. By this hypothesis we obtain a current, a prerequisite to the very idea of a canal, particularly in the streets of a city.

The *savans* of Europe have shown their profound ignorance of the first principles of canal navigation in taking it for granted that the canals of Mexico were filled with stagnant water, that had "set back" from the stagnant pond of Tezcuco; and that the level of the pond must at all times have been so high as to fill the canals, thus keeping the city in constant danger from any sudden rise in the laguna. But, aside from the rules of canal construction, there is an important sanitary question involved. The present ditches in the middle of the streets, though they have a perceptible current, and a slight infusion of *tequisquite*, are an intolerable nuisance, and have a deleterious effect upon the public health. How much more so must they have been when, from the uncleanly habits of the Indians, they were the common receptacle of all kinds of filth, and were constantly stirred up to their very bottoms by the setting-poles of the navigators? The system of canalling is a system of slack-water navigation, but abhors stagnant water.

We come next to the question of the dimensions of these street canals. We know that they were intended only for the navigation of Indian canoes; that two of them, which intersected the causeway of the night retreat, Cortéz crossed with his army, all of them climbing down into the canal, wading across, and then climbing up on the other side while loaded with their armor, and fighting all the time against a superior force of the Aztecs; and that Alvarado actually leaped across one of the open-

ings, shows conclusively that the canals could not have more than equaled in breadth the present canal of Chalco. On the hypothesis that Cortéz used scows that drew no more water than the scows that at present navigate the canals, his story becomes credible, so far, at least, as the possibility of making the circuit of the city in large boats in a season of rains.

It is an ungracious task to sift truth from fables. One man is displeased at seeing held up as a fiction a narrative which he has been accustomed to read with pleasure, and to take for truth, because it was elegantly written; and he requires an accumulation of proofs and arguments before he will abandon a belief which he has adopted without evidence. Another man, who deals only in matters of fact, is easily convinced, and is annoyed at an accumulation of proofs and arguments where one is sufficient. The superstitious man can not, of course, be convinced, for his belief does not rest upon evidence; and he is indignant that an attempt should be made to detract from the glory obtained by the Virgin Mary and the Church in this victory over the infidels. Had I attempted to prove that the feather which is now preserved with so much care in the Church of *San Juan de Lateran* at Rome did not fall from the wing of the angel Gabriel when he came to announce to Mary her conception, and that the whole history of that feather was a fable, notwithstanding it has received the attestations of so many of the Holy Fathers, I should be cursed for my impiety no more than I shall be for raising the question of the authenticity of the histories of the Conquest. With all these difficulties before me, I will venture to add one or two more reasons that have induced me to doubt the existence of those famous brigantines, which required a depth of twelve feet of water.

In support of the hypothesis that the street ditches,

called canals, were independent of the Tezcuco for their supply, we have still the remains of an old Indian dike, which extended from near Iztapalapan, along the east part of the city, to Guadalupe or Tepeyaca, which must have been intended to shut off the Tezcuco when the water was high, and when it receded they probably opened a weir at the northern extremity, through which the waters of the city that had been discharged upon the flats of San Lazaro found an outlet.

The waters of the valley are now distributed in the best possible manner to favor evaporation; and yet so completely is this power taxed, that when, in 1629, a water-spout, bursting over the small river Guautitlan, had forced the waters of Zumpango over its barriers into the San Cristobal, and that again into the Tezcuco, the city was inundated to the depth of about three feet. Evaporation was unable to remove or materially lessen this new volume of water in a period of five years. This fully demonstrates that the average annual fall of water is equal to the full capacity of evaporation. The valley of Mexico is a very small one over which to dispose of the mass of water that the mountain-torrents in summer and the tropical rains pour into it, and with the small margin of six and a half feet for rising and falling, the city must have been in constant jeopardy. Still the floods have been much less frequent than would have been supposed, fully demonstrating the great uniformity in the fall of water in the Mexican season of rain. When a water-spout occurred in the Chalco in 1446, in the time of the Aztec kings, there was a flood, which probably ran off into the Tezcuco. Under the Spaniards the following floods are enumerated: the first in 1553; the second in 1580; the third in 1604; the fourth in 1607; the fifth in 1629.

After the flood of 1607, the tunnel of Huehuetoca was

undertaken, and constructed in eleven months, for the purpose of letting out of the valley the waters of the River Guautitlan, so as to prevent it from falling into Tezcuco or flooding the city. For those times it was a great work, but we should say now that it was poorly engineered and badly managed, and not worthy the notice it has received in books on Mexico. Since that time, the great inundation of 1629 occurred while the mouth of the tunnel was closed. After that time, the Spaniards, instead of building inside of the tunnel an elliptical tube, actually, by a hundred years of misapplied labor, turned the tunnel into an open cut.

Cortéz furnished a map to illustrate his description. This map has the same defect as his narrative; that is, it was untrue at the time he made it. In order to bring the Tezcuco about the city, he places the village of that name due east of Mexico, although he well knew that it was nearly north, as the two towns are distinctly in sight, although at a distance of about six leagues. Now, if we carry the village of Tezcuco and the shore of the lake with it to its correct position, we shall have the Laguna of Tezcuco in about its present form and size. The apology for his defeat at Iztapalapan, by the breaking open of the dike and letting in the salt water, is, of course, inadequate, as the dike could not have supported a head of water sufficient to drown his men, nor could so great a head of salt water be obtained at that point.

In this survey of the ponds of Mexico, I have drawn upon the experience which has been acquired in the process of evaporation at the extensive salt manufactories of Syracuse and the surrounding villages in Western New York, and also the experience of our engineers upon the Erie Canal, and the engineers upon the dikes or levees at Sacramento, where the nature of the soil resembles that of Mexico. And I may now conclude this

long survey of the canals and lagunas of Mexico, by saying that it is a wise provision of Providence that all bodies of water that have no outlet are found to contain a considerable infusion of salt, otherwise their accumulations of decaying matter would be such that mankind could not live in their vicinity. This valley is an illustration of that truth. The Tezcuco, surrounded by barrenness, is not deleterious to life, while the fresh-water lagunas, though continually changing their volume, render Mexico unhealthy in summer by the gases which they exhale from decaying vegetation.

I have pretty thoroughly described this small valley, and have also stated how large a portion of it is flooded with surface-water, and how large a portion of this water is infused with salt. In the vicinity of Tacubaya the land is remarkably fertile, and there is good tillable land as the mountains are approached, especially about Chalco on the southeast; but under Indian cultivation, the whole of this valley could have produced sustenance for only an extremely limited population, if the product of the floating gardens and the ducks caught upon the pond should be added. It is totally inadequate to feed the population of Mexico under the vice-kings, 400,000, or its present population of say 300,000; nor could the valley itself be made to sustain one third of this. This valley, it must be recollected, is inclosed on all sides except the north by mountains that exceed 10,000 feet in height, while the commissariat capacity of barbaric tribes is not such as to provide extensive supplies from a distance. Under such circumstances, we should look for an extremely limited population. Yet the most surprising part of the story of the conquest is the enormous population assigned to the numerous large cities which they allege the valley contained. Diaz says, "A series of large towns stretched themselves along the banks of the lake,

out of which [the lake] still larger ones rose magnificently above the water." Cortéz says that Iztapalapan contained "10,000 families," which would give the town 50,000 inhabitants; "Amaqueruca, 20,000 inhabitants;" "Mexicalzingo, 3000 families," or 15,000 inhabitants; "Ayciaca more than 6000 families;" "Huchilohuchico, 5000 or 6000." The population of Chalco he does not give, nor the population of the very numerous villages whose names he mentions. At the present day there are a few mud huts in nearly every locality named, but not enough in any one instance to merit the name of a village. And this, I am inclined to believe, was the real condition of things in the time of Cortéz. The city of Mexico alone would have exhausted the limited resources of the valley. Old Thomas Gage was as much puzzled two hundred years ago to account for this astonishing disappearance of the numerous Indian cities of this valley as we are, and also for the supposed filling up of the lakes, never appearing to suspect that the story of Cortéz was a fiction.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Chinampas or Water Gardens.—Laws of Nature not set aside.—Mud will not float.—The present Chinampas.—They never could have been floating Gardens.—Relations of the Chinampas to the ancient State of the Lake in the Valley.

All the world has heard of the floating gardens (*chinampas*) of Mexico, but all the world has not seen them. I have not seen any floating gardens, nor, on diligent inquiry, have I been able to find a man, woman, or child that ever has seen them, nor do I believe that such a thing as a floating garden ever existed at Mexico. Humboldt admits that they do exist; says that he has seen floating earthy masses of great size in the tropical rivers, and then describes the manner of the construction of the chinampas, but in such a way as to satisfy the careful reader that he does not intend to say that he saw them himself, and evidently makes his statement upon hearsay; and takes it up as an admitted fact, without having his mind called to the physical impossibilities of floating a mass of earth that was of a greater specific gravity than water.

When the historians of the Conquest wrote their marvelous narratives of alleged adventures and of the new empire, it was a question for the Emperor and the Inquisition solely, whether their writings should pass for history or be condemned as fabulous. With this question the people had nothing to do but to believe as it suited those in authority. The question being settled that the publication of the letters of Cortéz as a verity would redound to the glory of the Church and the king, then

it was also settled that there should be no contradiction published; and as these marvelous tales were spread abroad throughout Europe, with the masses of silver from the newly-discovered mines, men were prepared to believe almost any thing—even that rich vegetable mould, when saturated with water, could float.

It not being lawful to promulgate the facts of the Conquest, the memory of events that really transpired ultimately passed from the recollections of men, so that the letters of Cortéz were taken for truth, even in their most minute details; so that, in a subsequent century, we find a vice-king employing an engineer to search for and clean out the hole in the bottom of the Tezcuco! for, from the vice-king down to the most insignificant official, all assumed that the letters of Cortéz gave a correct picture of affairs at that time; and all showed the greatest embarrassment in accounting for the magnitude of the changes that are supposed to have occurred without a sufficiently adequate cause. It is a common difficulty in all purely Catholic countries, for there the rule of evidence is an unnatural one. The people have been taught to believe from their infancy that the laws of nature can be set aside upon every trifling occasion, at the momentary caprice of any one of the multitude of saints "who are to govern the world;" and on proof that any mortal has set aside the laws of nature or wrought a miracle, he at once becomes a saint. With these "dutiful children of the Church" there can be no fixed laws of evidence; the only ground of belief is, and ever must be, Has the statement been sanctioned by the highest authority? If so, it is true; if not, it is to be doubted, however positive the proofs may be. A difficulty that the traveler every where encounters is that he can believe nothing that he hears, even on the most trifling subject, without careful examination and weighing of testimony. As

he can not examine every thing himself, he is constantly liable to be imposed upon by taking for granted that which is every where affirmed. Humboldt for once, with all his caution, seems to have fallen into the common trap, and credited, without examination, the story of the floating gardens.

The chinampas are formed on the fresh-water mud on each side of the canal of Chalco, from the southeast corner of the city to a point near the ancient village of Mexicalzingo, and for a part of the way they are on both sides of that beautiful but now neglected *paséo*, Las Vegas; there are also a small number near the causeway of Tacubaya, and in other parts of the marsh; their number might be extended without limit if it was not regulated by the demands of the vegetable market of Mexico. Chinampas are formed by laying upon the soft mud a very thick coating of reeds, or rather rushes, in the form and about the size of one of our largest canal scows. Between two chinampas a space of about half the width of one is left, and from this open space the mud is dipped up and poured upon the bed of dry rushes, where it dries, and forms a rich "muck" soil, which constitutes the garden. As the specific gravity of this garden is much greater than that of the water, or of the substratum of mud and water combined, it gradually sinks down into its muddy foundation; and in a few years it has to be rebuilt by laying upon the top of the garden a new coating of rushes and another covering of mud. Thus they have been going on for centuries, one garden being placed upon the top of another, and a third placed over all, so soon as the second gives signs of being swallowed up in the all-devouring mud.

The gardeners navigate the open space between their islands with light boats; and during the short hours of the morning, the market-boat alongside each island is

loaded with a cargo of vegetables, fruits, and flowers, which are to be displayed in the great market of Santa Anna. More pleasing than a drive on the *paséo* is a boat-ride down the canal of Chalco at eventide, when the proprietor of each of these little estates is seen standing in the canal alongside, and throwing upon his thirsty plants a plentiful supply of the tepid canal water, which, from every leaf and flower, reflects back the rays of a setting sun, that have penetrated the long shadows of the trees of Las Vegas. Some of the chinampas have small huts upon them, where a gardener lives, who watches over two or three of these little properties. Sometimes also shrubs, and even trees, are planted along the edges, which yield both fruits and flowers, and serve to keep the dry earth from falling into the water. When looking at one of the largest and best cared for chinampas, the beholder can hardly divest himself of the idea that it is a floating island, and might well have been the residence of Calypso.

This is the whole of the story of the chinampas, the most fertile and beautiful little gardens upon the face of the earth. A correct picture of them would be poetry enough, without the addition of falsehood; for whether it is the rainy season or the dry season, it is always the same to them. They know no exclusive seed-time, and have no especial season for harvest; but blossoms and ripe fruits grow side by side, and flowers flourish at all seasons. As market gardens they are unrivaled, and to them Mexico is indebted for its abundant supplies.

The evidence that Humboldt* produces in favor of floating gardens, viz., that he saw floating islands of some 30 feet in length in the midst of the current of rivers, amounts to little in this case; for every one that has traveled extensively in tropical lowlands has seen veg-

* *Essai Politique*, vol. ii. p. 61.

etation spring up upon floating masses of brush-wood. Where earth torn from the river bank is so bound together by living roots as to form a raft, it will always float for a little while upon the current, provided that its specific gravity does not materially exceed that of the water; and those grasses that flourish best in water will spring up and grow upon these islands. Peat, too, in bogs, will float and form islands, for the simple reason that it is of less specific gravity than water; and vegetation will also spring up on these peat islands. But all this furnishes no evidence that the invariable law of nature, which carries to the bottom the heaviest body, has been suspended at Mexico. Had the floating gardens been built in large boats made water-tight, they might have floated. But, unfortunately, the Indians had not the means for constructing such boats. Even timber-rafts would have become saturated in time, and sunk, as rafts of logs do if kept too long in the "mill-pond," waiting to be sawed into lumber.

There is another law of nature, which must not be lost sight of, which is at war with the idea of a garden floating on a bed of rushes; and that is capillary attraction, which would raise particles of water, one by one, among the fibres of the rushes until the frail raft on which the earth rested was saturated; and still pressing upward, the busy drops would penetrate the superincumbent earth, moistening and adding to the specific gravity of the garden by filling the porous earth until it became too heavy to float, if it ever had floated.

Nearly three hundred years had passed away before men could dare to question the truth of the statement that the gardens along the canal of Chalco ever floated, and then it seemed like temerity to raise the question, even if it were only a popular fallacy. It has therefore been treated by all modern writers as a well-established

matter, and one of not sufficient importance to justify its minute investigation. With me the question was a far different one. I had, after careful inquiry and observation, come to the conclusion that the marshes of the valley of Mexico were, in the time of Cortéz, substantially in the condition in which we find them at the present day; that the filling up they had undergone in that time was counterbalanced by the relief they had gained by the canal of Huehuetoca. The chinampas constitute an important link in the chain of proofs to establish this fact. If I have succeeded in showing that these gardens of the Aztecs, instead of floating upon the water, rested upon the muddy bottom, it follows as a matter of course that the depth of the water in the laguna could not, in the day of the Aztecs, have been materially greater than it now is.

CHAPTER XVII.

The gambling Festival of San Augustine.—Suppressed by Government.—The Losses of the Saint by the Suppression of Gambling.—How Travelers live in the Interior.—A Visit to the Palace.

I HAVE already said that my first entry into the valley of Mexico was from the south, through the suburban city of Tlalpan, where in good old times was held the great gambling festival of San Augustine. The advancing morality of our day has put an extinguisher on this noted festival, which was one of the most noted days in the Mexican calendar. Crowds flocked to it to gamble, to dance, and to adore the most holy Saint Augustine. To a looker-on it was hard to say whether it was the devil or the saint whom the people had come to worship. The chief business of high-born dames seemed to be to make a display of their taste in dress, and to set off the whole contents of their wardrobe; for five times in each day were their ball costumes changed, and so often did they appear in a new set of jewels. To this festival came also noblemen and highway robbers, to gamble and to rob each other, and to be robbed by the women at the *monté* table. In honor of the saint, the city was crowded with monks, and thieves, and Magdalens, and the dignitaries of the Church and state. The rich and the poor came together to enjoy the saturnalia in honor of the most blessed Saint Augustine. Gambling was here duly sanctified by the participation of the priests, who were here, as they are every where in Mexico, the most expert gamblers at the tables. While this festival continued, money changed hands more rapidly

than in California in her worst days. Five dances a day were the pastime; but at the monté table was the solid sport. This was the great attraction that had called all the crowd together. It was an exciting scene to see the ounces piled up as men got excited in the game. What is there left of woman's virtue, when the highest ladies of the court stake their ounces at a public gaming-table, and poorer ones eagerly throw down their last piece of silver? Woman's rights have not yet reached that point with us that she may gamble and get drunk without losing caste; and God grant they never may.

It is a consolation to be able to add that the late government of the State of Mexico had sufficient firmness to suppress this abominable festival of the Church, much to the pecuniary disadvantage of the saint and his priesthood. Indeed, there is now no public gambling, not even in the city of Mexico, except the lottery of the Academy of Fine Arts, and the lottery which is monthly drawn to promote the adoration of our Lady of Guadalupe. This last is one of the most corrupting of all lotteries. Tickets for as small a price as a Spanish shilling are hawked about the street, and by the exhibition of a splendid scheme the poor Indians are tempted to venture their last *real* in the hopes of winning a rich prize, through the kind interposition of the Virgin, to whom they are taught to pray for that purpose. It is true that a mass is performed for the benefit of all losers, but this mass has never had the power of restoring to the poor Indian his lost shilling.

Let us now go from this place, where gambling used annually to have its festival, or, rather, harvest of victims, into the cathedral church of San Augustine, to whom the lucky gamblers were accustomed to dedicate a part of their winnings, that thus they might sanctify their unrighteous calling by bringing robbery to the saint

for an offering. Poor saint! how much he and his priests have suffered by this wanton interference of the civil government in Church affairs—this prohibition of monté-playing in honor of the festival of San Augustine! There was much in this church to admire, and much of that gold displayed which gamblers are accustomed to lavish upon their idols. It seemed like another worship and another religion from that which I had been accustomed to witness in the humble chapels of the Pintos, in whose country I had so long been wandering.

Again I was in the saddle, and soon upon that noted causeway by which Cortéz entered the city of Mexico. It has lost none of its attractions in the course of centuries, but has been kept in fine repair as a carriage-road, while the venerable trees that line it on either side look as old as the time of the Conquistadors. This noble carriage-way, through the marshy ground of the valley of Mexico, is an enlargement of the old causeway of the Indians, or, rather, it has been built over and around it, that having been less than thirty feet in width. I soon arrived at Churubusco, the scene of one of the bloody battles of the American campaign in this valley. There was little here to look at, and I hurried on and entered the south gate of the city, and soon arrived at the *Hôtel de Paris*, to which I had been directed. My poor old mustang here ended a twelve days' journey, over mountains and plains of *pedregal*, without a shoe to his hoofs.

A party of Californians, who had been stopping here for some weeks, had left the day before, and I was ushered into French society, in which to form my first impressions of Mexico. Still, there was an exquisite pleasure in once more getting clean, and eating food cooked after a civilized manner. Not that I had in any wise become tired of drinking porridge, extracted from corn, called *atola*, or dissatisfied with eating bits of fowl, which

the second censure, neither of which he would nor could revoke until Don Pedro Mexia had submitted himself to the Church and to a public absolution, and had satisfied the priests and the cloisters who suffered for him, and had disclaimed that unlawful and unconscionable monopoly wherewith he wronged the whole commonwealth, and especially the poorer sort therein.

"The viceroy, not brooking this saucy answer from a priest, commanded him presently to be apprehended, and to be taken under guard to San Juan de Ulua, and then to be shipped to Spain. The archbishop, having notice of this resolution of the viceroy, retired to Guadalupe, with many of his priests and prebends, leaving a bill of excommunication against the viceroy himself upon the church doors, intending privately to fly to Spain, there to give an account of his carriage and behavior. But he could not escape the care and vigilance of the viceroy, who, with his sergeant and officers, pursued him to Guadalupe, which the archbishop understanding, he betook himself to the sanctuary of the church, and there caused the candles to be lighted upon the altar, and the sacrament of his bread god to be taken out of the tabernacle, and attiring himself with his pontifical vestments, with his mitre on his head, his crosier in one hand, in the other he took his god of bread, and thus, with his train of priests about him at the altar, he waited for the coming of the sergeant and officers, whom he thought, with his god in his hand, and with a Here I am, to astonish and amaze, and to make them, as did Christ the Jews in the garden, to fall backward, and disable them from laying hands on him.

"The officers, coming into the church, went toward the altar where the bishop stood, and, kneeling down first to worship their *god*, made short prayers; which being ended, they propounded unto the bishop, with courteous

and fair words, the cause of their coming to that place, requiring him to lay down the sacrament [the consecrated wafer], and to come out of the church, and to hear the notification of what orders they brought unto him in the king's name. To whom the archbishop replied, that whereas their master the viceroy was excommunicated, he looked upon him as one out of the pale of the Church, and one without any power or authority to command him in the house of God, and so required them, as they regarded the good of their souls, to depart peaceably, and not to infringe the privileges and immunities of the Church by exercising in it any legal act of secular power and command; and that he would not go out of the church unless they durst take him and the sacrament together. With this the head officer, named Tiroll, stood up and notified unto him an order, in the king's name, to apprehend his person in what place soever he should find him, and to guard him to the port of San Juan de Ulua, and there to deliver him to whom by farther order he should be directed thereto, to be shipped to Spain as a traitor to the king's crown, a troubler of the common peace, and an author and mover of sedition in the commonwealth.

"The archbishop, smiling to Tiroll, answered him, 'Thy master useth too high terms and words, which do better agree unto himself, for I know no mutiny or sedition like to trouble the commonwealth, unless it be by his and Don Pedro Mexia his oppressing of the poor. And as for thy guarding me to San Juan de Ulua, I conjure thee by Jesus Christ, whom thou knowest I hold in my hands, not to use here any violence in God's house, from whose altar I am resolved not to depart; take heed God punish you not, as he did Jeroboam for stretching forth his hand at the altar against the prophet; let his withered hand remind thee of thy duty.' But Tiroll suffer-

ed him not to squander away the time and ravel it out with farther preaching, but called to the altar a priest, whom he had brought for the purpose, and commanded him, in the king's name, to take the sacrament [wafer] out of the archbishop's hand; which the priest doing, the archbishop, unvesting himself of his pontificals, yielded himself unto Tiroll; and, taking his leave of all his prebends, requiring them to be witnesses of what had been done, he went prisoner to San Juan de Ulua, where he was delivered to the custody of the governor of the castle, and, not many days after, was sent in a ship prepared for that purpose to Spain, to the king in council, with a full charge of all his carriages and misdemeanors."

CHAPTER XXII.

The old Indian City of Mexico.—The Mosques.—Probable Extent of Civilization.—Aztecs acquired Arts of the Toltecs.—Toltec Civilization, ancient and original.—The Pyramid of Papantla.—The Plunder of Civilization.—Mexico as described by Cortéz.—Montezuma's Court.—The eight Months that Cortéz held Montezuma.—What happened for the next ten Months.—The Siege of Mexico by Cortéz.—Aztecs conquered by Famine and Thirst.—Heroes on Paper and Victories without Bloodshed.—Cortéz and Morgan.

As we have carefully surveyed the suburbs, and all the valley of Mexico, it is time to take a survey of the city itself, and examine its condition at different periods of its history.

The Aztec city of Mexico perished with its conquest by the Spaniards. Day by day, as the siege went on, the Indians that followed the soldiers pulled the houses down, when the latter had passed, and threw the rubbish into the canals; so that, on the day on which the conquest was effected, the city ceased to exist. Many times has that old city been restored, in the imagination of enthusiasts, with its forty pyramids (*teocallis*) and unnumbered palaces, adorned with all the luxury and magnificence of the most refined civilization, united with barbaric grandeur and inhumanity in so strange a combination as to distract our feelings between hate and admiration.

It was easy to build an Indian city that would present a most imposing appearance, for the climate was well fitted for drying mud thoroughly. Besides, there was an inexhaustible supply of pumice-stone (*tepetate*), and an exceedingly soft, gray quarry stone, for caps and

lintels, with an excellent quality of cement, and material for "*fresco* painting" of the walls, abundant and cheap. All these articles are combined in the building of the modern city, and give it its present appearance of elegance and great durability. But in the old city, one-story palaces of dried mud, plastered and frescoed, with large interior courts like that I have described at Tezcuco, must have been among the most imposing structures. If *tepetate* was employed in the construction of the royal palaces, it would not have added materially to the weight resting upon the earthy foundations; for when the water in the ditches occupied half the street,* the foundations must have been so much softer than at present, that structures of the lightest material only could be borne.

In his anxiety to keep up a resemblance between his conquests and that of Granada, Cortéz calls the *teocallis*, or Indian mounds which he found, *mosques*, and speaks of "forty towers, the largest of which has fifty steps leading to its main body, and is higher than the tower of the principal church in Seville."† Bernal Diaz says there were "115 steps to the summit."‡ I must reduce the size of this great pyramid to the size of the isolated rock that the Cathedral is said to occupy. The difficulty of getting rid of the earth that composed these forty artificial mountains does not seem to have troubled historians so much as it would a contractor. I have often thought that those hillocks of earth on the north side of the town were once small artificial mounds on which the Indians offered their worship, for in the canal near by was found that collection of clay divinities of which I have already spoken.

The difficulty in the way of forming a correct idea of that old city, is owing to the defective character of our

* Cortéz, *Letters*, p. 111. † Ibid. ‡ *Diaz*, p. 247.

witnesses. The one confesses to the habitual practice of falsehood for the purpose of deceiving the Indians; the other acknowledges practices that render the character of both infamous, and would make their testimony of no weight in a court of justice unless corroborated. We must therefore feel our way as best we can.

With the rude implements of the Indians, houses of the driest blocks of mud, though covered with cement and painted with colored wash, could easily have been thrown down; but gunpowder or iron bars would have been necessary to overturn a wall composed either of stone or *tepetate* and cement. Villages built of dried mud are often imposing in their appearance, and are yet most perishable; for the first overflow of waters, that shall cover but a few inches of the walls of the houses, will in a few hours reduce a whole village to a mass of ruins. Again, the dry wall that has fallen becomes saturated, and dissolves itself into soft mud. My hypothesis is, therefore, not without its difficulty, for at every inundation of the city in the times of the Aztecs we have to suppose it totally destroyed; an evil that could not be remedied until the water had entirely subsided, and new mud had been formed into blocks and dried in the sun, and a new village or city built every twenty-five years.

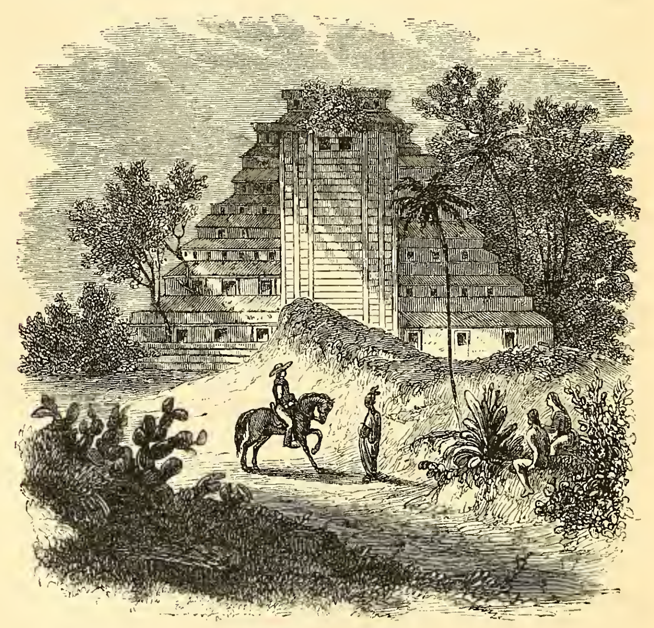
To sum up my theory of Aztec civilization: they had earthen gods, earthen cooking utensils, and earthen aqueducts; their temples were small buildings, upon moderately-sized Indian burial mounds, and their palaces and sacred inclosures were of dried mud, and of a single story in height.

With this solution, the difficulty that occurred to Humboldt is in part removed, viz., that the allotted time—one hundred and seventy years—was too short a period in which to transform a tribe of North American Indians

into a settled community. The remainder of the difficulty is explained by an event taking place in our own days. It is hardly thirty years since the Apache Indians began the systematic plunder of the northern states of Mexico, and now even these nomades begin to show the first glimmerings of civilization. Their captives teach them the use of much of the plunder they have brought to their own villages. Though their treatment of female captives is inhuman, yet it is not an uncommon thing for a captive to become a wife, and to introduce into her wigwam, and to inculcate upon the minds of her children, a few of the primary ideas of civilization. It is the commonly received notion that the Toltecs abandoned the table-land about the time of the arrival of the Aztecs, but continued to flourish in the region of the Gulf coast and in other parts of the hot country; that the vast ruins which abound in those regions were inhabited cities till within a few generations of the coming of the Spaniards; and that in Yucatan, the part most distant from Mexico, that civilization continued quite down to that period; that for a great portion of the one hundred and seventy years of their national existence, the Aztecs kept up predatory excursions into the Toltec region, and out of its dense population derived an inexhaustible supply of slaves and the plunder of civilization, included in which may have been the best wrought of the stone idols that are still preserved. So that the Aztec civilization resolves itself into the very ancient civilization of the Toltecs.

We have removed to a greater antiquity, but have not got rid of the question of the origin of Mexican civilization. The year 600, named by Humboldt, may be considered as the time of their appearance on the table-land; but many of the ruins in the hot country might claim a thousand years earlier antiquity. These massive re-

mains must have stood, abandoned as they now are, in the midst of the forest, for a long time before the Conquest, as their very existence was unknown to the Spaniards until near the close of the last century. The close resemblance between the apparently most ancient of these works, and those of the Egyptians and other Eastern civilizations, does not involve the idea of a common origin or of intercourse, but only leads to the suggestion that the human race, in its progress, naturally follows the same path, whether upon the eastern or western continent, and that it is separated by a cycle of thousands of years from the civilization of our day. As a specimen of the works of the Toltecs, I insert a sketch of the pyramid of Papantla.



PYRAMID OF PAPANTLA.

"The pyramid of Papantla," says Humboldt,* "is not constructed like the pyramids of Cholula and Mexico. The only materials employed are immense stones. Mortar is distinguished in the seams. The edifice, however, is not so remarkable for its size as for its symmetry, the polish of the stones, and the great regularity of their cut. The base of the pyramid is an exact square, each side being eighty-two feet in length. The perpendicular height appears not to be more than from fifty-two to sixty-five feet. This monument, like all the Mexican *teocallis*, is composed of several stages. Six are still distinguishable, and a seventh appears to be concealed by the vegetation with which the sides of the pyramid are covered. A great stairway of fifty-seven steps conducts to the truncated top of the *teocalli*, where the human victims were sacrificed. On each side of the great stairs is a flight of small stairs. The facing of the stories is adorned with hieroglyphics, in which serpents and crocodiles, carved in relievo, are discernible. Each story contains a great number of square niches, symmetrically distributed. In the first story we reckon twenty-four on each side, in the second twenty, and in the third sixteen. The number of these niches in the body of the pyramid is three hundred and sixty-six, and there are twelve in the stairs toward the east. The Abbé Marquez supposes that this number of three hundred and seventy-eight niches has some allusion to a calendar of the Mexicans, and he even believes that in each of them one of the twenty figures was repeated, which, in the hieroglyphical language of the Toltecs, served as a symbol for marking the days of the common year, and the intercalated days at the end of the cycles. The year being composed of eighteen months of twenty days, there would then be three hundred and sixty days, to which,

* *Essai Politique*, vol. ii. p. 172.

agreeable to the Egyptian practice, five complementary days were added. . . . . This pyramid was visited by M. Dupé, a captain in the service of the King of Spain. He possesses the bust, in basalt, of a Mexican, which I employed M. Massard to engrave, and which bears great resemblance to the *calautica* of the heads of Isis."

I prefer in this way to copy from an author of unquestionable authority an important historical fact, rather than to search for less accessible sources of evidence on which I rest the theory, that what of this kind we have seen at the city of Mexico are but fragments from the wreck that befell the American civilization of antiquity, which had succumbed before the inroads of northern savages. This is sufficient inquiry into antiquities till we come to the museum.

It is but justice to add the substance of Cortéz's account of this ancient city, which is embodied in the following paragraphs:

"This noble city contains many fine and magnificent houses, which may be accounted for from the fact that all the nobility of the country, who are the vassals of Montezuma, have houses in the city, in which they reside a certain part of the year; and, besides, there are numerous wealthy citizens who also possess fine houses. All these persons, in addition to the large and spacious apartments for ordinary purposes, have others, both upper and lower, that contain conservatories of flowers. Along one of the causeways [the Chapultepec] that lead into the city are laid two [water] pipes, constructed of masonry, each of which is two paces in width, and about five feet in height. . . . . The inhabitants of this city pay greater regard to the style of their mode of living, and are more attentive to elegance of dress and politeness of manners than those of other provinces and cities, since, as the caçique Montezuma has his residence in the

capital, and all the nobility, his vassals, are in the constant habit of meeting there, a general courtesy of demeanor necessarily prevails. . . . . For, as I have already stated, what can be more wonderful than that a barbarous monarch, as he is, should have every object found in his dominions imitated in gold, silver, precious stones, and feathers, the gold and silver being wrought so naturally as not to be surpassed by any smith in the world, the stone-work executed with such perfection that it is difficult to conceive what instruments could have been used, and the feather-work superior to the finest production in wax and embroidery? . . . . He possessed out of the city as well as within numerous villas, each of which had its peculiar sources of amusement, and all were constructed in the best possible manner for the use of a great prince or lord. Within the city, his palaces were so wonderful that it is hardly possible to describe their beauty and extent. I can only say that in Spain there is nothing equal to them. There was one palace somewhat inferior to the rest, attached to which was a beautiful garden, with balconies extending over it, supported by marble columns, and having a floor formed of jasper elegantly inlaid. There were apartments in this palace sufficient to lodge two princes of the highest rank with their retinues. . . . . The emperor has another beautiful palace, with a large court-yard paved with handsome flags in the style of a chess-board.

"Every day, as soon as it was light, six hundred nobles and men of rank were in attendance at the palace, who either sat or walked about the halls and galleries, and passed their time in conversation, but without entering the apartments where his person was. . . . . Daily his larder and wine-cellar* were open to all who wished

* This is a little too strong a statement, considering that there never was and never could be a cellar at Mexico.

to eat and drink. The meals were served by three hundred youths, who brought on an infinite variety of dishes; indeed, whenever he dined or supped, the table was loaded with every kind of flesh, fish, and vegetables that the country produced. The meals were served in a large hall, in which Montezuma was accustomed to eat, and the dishes quite filled the room, which was covered with mats, and kept very clean. He sat on a small cushion curiously wrought of leather.* He is also dressed four times every day in four different suits entirely new, which he never wears a second time. None of the caçiques who enter his palace have their feet covered, and when those for whom he sends enter his presence, they incline their heads and look down, bending their bodies; and when they address him, they do not look him in the face; this arises from excessive modesty and reverence.† . . . . No sultan or other infidel lord, of whom any knowledge now exists, ever had so much ceremonial in his court."

It was in the spring of 1519 that Cortéz and his company had landed at Vera Cruz. From that point they had marched toward Mexico without opposition, except the skirmishes with the Tlascalans, and without opposition they had entered the city of Mexico on the 5th of November, 1519. Here they had been received with every mark of hospitality and treated with every kindness. But this did not prevent their treacherously seizing the person of their host, and making him a prisoner in their quarters. In his name they had governed his tribe, and ransacked his dominions in search of the treasures collected by the gold-washers, and had even

* The naked negro alcalde mentioned in Chapter XII. was also seated on a leather cushion.

† This is not all fancy. No people in the world show more profound reverence to the aged or deference to their chiefs than the North American Indians.

interfered in the religious worship of a superstitious people, and murdered, in cold blood, a party of their chiefs celebrating an Indian feast. Still there had been no war, until Ordaz was sent, with his four hundred men, to recapture the concubines of Cortéz, who had been rescued, as already mentioned. This was in July of the following year, eight months after their first entry into Mexico, and on the 10th of July, 1520, the licentious rule of the Spaniards at Mexico was terminated by the events of the *triste noche.*

The mere handful that had at first entered the city had been increased by the army of Narvaez, so that when the news reached Cortéz that Alvarado and the eighty odd men that had been left with him in the city were threatened with difficulty, he marched a well-appointed army of fourteen hundred men, besides two hundred Tlascalans, to his relief. Their retreat to Tlascala has already been described, the character of the brigantines has been discussed, as well as the absurd story of his having dug a slip or launching canal at Tezcuco, twelve feet broad and twelve feet deep. We have seen that the towns and villages said to have been built in the lake, and the still greater number of large towns on the main land, could only have been petty Indian hamlets, and that the central portions of the valley of Mexico would not have been habitable if the lakes of Mexico had been any thing more than evaporation ponds. And, lest I should venture too far, I will conclude this remark by adverting to the testimony of Diaz, which concedes that when his book was written the face of the country was substantially as it now is, and as I have already described it to be. But he endeavors to save the story of the Conquest by the shallow pretense that, during the few years that intervened between that event

and the date of his history, the whole face of the country had completely changed.*

The great mystery is why so large a body of Spaniards, if they really amounted to the number claimed by Cortéz, should have retreated from the city at all, as they do not complain of being short of provisions. They had the great *teocalli* for a fortress, on which they might have planted their cannon, and leveled the city in a few days, if not in a few hours, and the great Plaza in which to manœuvre their cavalry and protect the Indians while leveling the rubbish of the broken walls. But a panic having seized them, and having escaped from the city by a badly-managed night retreat, ten months elapsed before the Spaniards, on the 13th of May, 1521, laid siege to the city. And with varying success the siege was continued just three months, until Guatemozin was taken prisoner, on the 13th of August, 1521, so that the siege was carried on in the midst of the rainy season, when the flats must have been covered with water, and the ditches well filled. No difficulty was experienced in bringing up his flat-boats to the sides of the muddy causeways, or in cutting off the supplies of provisions by water, or in breaking down the earthen aqueduct of Chapultepec, so that the Indians were finally subdued by the combined forces of hunger and thirst. When the Aztecs were so enfeebled by want that they could no longer offer resistance, the Spaniards rushed into the

* "Iztapalapan was at that time a town of considerable magnitude, built half in the water and half on dry land. The spot where it stood is at present all dry land; and where vessels once sailed up and down, seeds are sown and harvests gathered. In fact, the whole face of the country is so completely changed, that he who had not seen these parts previously would scarcely believe that waves had ever rolled over the spot where now fertile corn-plantations extend themselves to all sides, so wonderfully have all things changed here in a short space of time." —Bernal Diaz, vol. i. p. 220.

town, seized the unresisting Guatemozin, and shouted victory.

It requires a familiarity with Spanish character, and the Moorish, Oriental origin of their literature, in order to read Spanish-American military annals understandingly, as much so as it does a knowledge of Indian character in order to sift out the truth from accounts of Indian wars. The superstitious dread which the Aztecs at all times evinced for the Spanish horses and horsemen is common to all savages.* The appearance

* Moffatt's Southern Africa, page 242, furnishes the following complete illustration of the effect produced by horsemen and fire-arms upon savage warriors. "The commando approached within 150 yards with a view to beckon some one to come out. On this, the enemy commenced their terrible howl, and at once discharged their clubs and javelins. Their black, dismal appearance and savage fury, with their hoarse and stentorian voices, were calculated to daunt; and the Griquas [horsemen], on their first attack, wisely retreated to a short distance, and then drew up. Waterboer, the chief, commenced firing, and leveled one of their warriors to the ground; several more instantly shared the same fate. It was confidently expected that their courage would be daunted when they saw their warriors fall by an invisible weapon, and it was hoped they would be humbled and alarmed, that thus further bloodshed might be prevented. Though they beheld with astonishment the dead and the stricken warriors writhing in the dust, they looked with lion-like fierceness at the horsemen, and yelled vengeance, violently wrenching the weapons from the hands of their dying companions to supply the place of those they had discharged at their antagonists. Sufficient intervals were afforded, and every encouragement held out for them to make proposals, but all was ineffectual. They sallied forth with increased vigor, so as to oblige the Griquas to retreat, though only to a short distance, for they never attempted to pursue above 200 yards from their camp. The firing, though without any order, was very destructive, as each took a steady aim. Many of their chief men fell victims to their own temerity, after manifesting undaunted spirit. Again and again the chiefs and Mr. Melville met to deliberate on how to act to prevent bloodshed among a people who determined to die rather than flee, which they could easily have done.

"Soon after the battle commenced, the Bechuanas came up, and united in playing on the enemy with poisoned arrows, but they were soon driven back; half a dozen of the fierce Mantatees [the enemy] made the whole body scamper off in wild disorder. After two hours and a half's combat, the Griquas, finding their ammunition fast diminishing, at the almost certain risk of loss of life, began to storm [charge], when the enemy gave

of two or three horses, kept ready for that purpose, was sufficient to restore the battle after the Spaniards had

way, taking a westerly direction. The horsemen, however, intercepted them, when they immediately descended toward the ravine, as if determined not to return by the way they came, which they crossed, but were again intercepted. On turning round they seemed desperate, but were again soon repulsed. Great confusion now prevailed, the ground being very stony, which rendered it difficult to manage the horses. At this moment an awful scene was presented to the view. The undulating country around was covered with warriors all in motion, so that it was difficult to say who were enemies or who were friends. Clouds of dust were rising from the immense masses, who appeared flying with terror or pursuing with fear. To the alarming confusion was added the bellowing of oxen, the vociferations of the yet unvanquished warriors, mingled with the groans of the dying, and the widows' piercing wail, and the cries from infant voices. The enemy again directed their course toward a town which was in possession of a tribe of the same people still more numerous. Here again another desperate struggle ensued, when they appeared determined to inclose the horsemen within the smoke and flames of the houses, through which they were slowly passing, giving the enemy time to escape. At last, seized with despair, they fled precipitately. It had been observed during the fight that some women went backward and forward to the town, only about half a mile distant, apparently with the most perfect indifference to their fearful situation. While the commando was struggling between hope and despair of being able to rout the enemy, information was brought that the half of the enemy, under Choane, were reposing in the town, within sound of the guns, perfectly regardless of the fate of the other division, under the command of Karagauye. It was supposed they possessed entire confidence in the yet invincible army of the latter, being the more warlike of the two. Humanly speaking, had both parties been together, the day would have been lost, when they would with perfect ease have carried devastation into the centre of the colony [of the Cape]. When both parties were united, they set fire to all parts of the town, and appeared to be taking their departure, proceeding in an immense body toward the north. If their number may be calculated by the space of ground occupied by the entire body, it must have amounted to upward of 40,000. The Griquas pursued them about eight miles; and though they continued desperate, they seemed filled with terror at the enemies by whom they had been overcome. . . . . As fighting was not my province, I avoided discharging a single shot, though, at the request of Mr. Melville and the chiefs, I remained with the commando as the only means of safety. Seeing the savage ferocity of the Bechuanas in killing the inoffensive women and children for the sake of a few paltry rings, or to boast that they had killed some of the Mantatees, I turned my attention to these objects of pity, who were flying in consternation in all directions. By my galloping in among them, many of the Be-

taken to their heels. And while the facts of the siege amount to little more than keeping possession of the narrow causeways, by aid of superior implements of war, until famine and thirst had done their work, yet the Spanish histories of the Conquest make it to surpass in interest, and in the magnitude of forces engaged, almost any siege on record. And so plausibly is the narrative written, that the reader drinks it in with breathless anxiety, without once stopping to ask himself how so many hundreds of thousands of Indians could be fed in a salt valley, inclosed by high mountains, without the aid of a regularly organized commissariat department, or how such masses of undisciplined Indians could be manœu-

chuanas were deterred from their barbarous purpose. Shortly after they began to retreat, the women, seeing that mercy was shown them, instead of flying, generally sat down, and, baring their bosoms, exclaimed, 'I am a woman. I am a woman.' It seemed impossible for the men to yield. There were several instances of wounded men being surrounded by fifty Bechuanas, but it was not till life was almost extinct that a single one would allow himself to be conquered. I saw more than one instance of a man fighting boldly with ten or twelve spears or arrows fixed in his body. . . . The men, struggling with death, would raise themselves from the ground, and discharge their weapons at any one of our number within their reach: their hostile and revengeful spirit only ceased when life was extinct. Contemplating this deadly conflict, we could not but admire the mercy of God that not one of our number was killed, and only one slightly wounded. One Bechuana lost his life while too eagerly seeking for plunder. The slain of the enemy was between four and five hundred.

"The Mantatees are a tall, robust people, in features resembling the Bechuanas; the dress, consisting of prepared ox-hides, hanging doubly over their shoulders. The men, during the engagement, were nearly naked, having on their heads a round cockade of black ostrich feathers. Their ornaments were large copper rings, sometimes eight in number, worn round their necks, with numerous arm, leg, and ear rings of the same material. Their weapons were war-axes of various shapes, and clubs. Into many of their knob-sticks were inserted pieces of iron resembling a sickle, but more curved, sometimes to a circle, and sharp on the outside. They appeared more rude and barbarous than the tribes around us, the natural consequences of the warlike life they had led. They were suffering dreadfully from want; even in the heat of battle, the poorest class seized pieces of meat and devoured them raw."

vred upon a narrow causeway, where numbers add no strength, but only tend to augment the confusion—where, as in this case, there had to be a daily advance and retreat in presence of an active enemy.

The interesting note which we have copied describes an event within the memory of the present generation. And it is well recollected what trepidation was caused in that colony of the British Empire by the approach to the frontier of a nation of barbarians who despised fear, whose religion was war, and who knew no sin like that of turning the back to any enemy. Yet a hundred horsemen, with firearms, from a missionary village, unaccustomed to war, were sufficient to turn back this mighty host of brave savages. It can not be claimed that the Aztecs were superior to these Mantatees, or that the force of Cortéz was inferior in equipment to the hundred unwarlike Griquas whose "thunder and lightning" (as they termed the musketry) drove them back. The missionary was a Protestant, a man of truth, and had no glory to win, and therefore told only the simple truth. Cortéz, out of a much inferior affair, has fabricated a romance, with such verisimilitude that he has astonished the world by an account of achievements which he never performed. To write well is nine tenths of a hero; and in the time of Cortéz, as it is even now at Mexico, it was the easiest thing imaginable to manufacture an astonishing victory out of the very smallest amount of material. If no lives were lost in the battle, so much more astounding is the victory. This practice of sacrificing human life is only a modification of cannibalism, and the very mission on which the Spaniards came to Mexico was to extinguish that crime, so that they would jeopardize their title to the country should they presume to shed the blood of each other in their interminable wars. And so long as only women, and

children, and Indians are the sufferers, they do no violence to the rules of warfare which Cortéz and the Conquistadors introduced. The armies of Mexico have never been deficient in good writers; a specimen of the capacity of one of them I have already given in the chapter on Texas; so that their stately and dignified histories of the national squabbles of the last thirty years are equal to Cortéz in gross exaggeration, and not a whit behind him in elegance of composition.

A hundred years after the conquest of Mexico, there sailed out of the harbor of Port Royal, now Kingston, in Jamaica, an unlawful military enterprise, about equal in force to that with which Cortéz first landed at Vera Cruz, but immensely inferior to the panic-stricken host that fled by night from the city of Mexico. The fitting out of this unlawful expedition, like that of Cortéz, had the connivance of the local authorities. The difference between the two was, that Morgan did not understand the Spanish Oriental style of proclaiming his own heroism, and furthermore, his expedition was not directed against a miserably-armed rabble of Indians, but against the fortified city of Panama, held by a garrison of royal troops.

Mooring his little fleet in the harbor of Chagres, Morgan marched his small force across the Isthmus, which then presented greater difficulties to his passage with cannon and munitions of war than Cortéz encountered in his march to Mexico. Like Cortéz in his first expedition, Morgan met with no opposition in his first visit to Panama, but, with his men, lived at free quarters in rioting and debauchery, committing those atrocities that pirates alone can commit, until, their appetites and their passions being satiated, they returned to the Gulf coast, taking with them the plunder of a city which was then the depository of the treasures drawn from South Amer-

ica. They returned a second time to Panama, as Cortéz did to Mexico.* This time they met with resistance, but they carried the town by assault, and devoted it to utter destruction. Their efforts were seconded by a terrible earthquake, from which the people fled, and built a new city at a distance of a few miles from the ruins.

For more than two hundred years the rank vegetation of a tropical forest has been driving its massive roots beneath its foundations, and yet the ruins of Panama still bear the marks of having once been a city of much magnificence. Two massive stone bridges, a pavement, diverse broken walls, and a solid tower standing up above the tops of the tall forest-trees, proclaim the incontrovertible fact that the traces of a large city can not be altogether blotted out in the course of a few centuries.

Morgan has never gratified the world with a narrative of his adventures, nor has any of his gang enlightened us with a history of the conquest of Panama, nor has any Saxon bishop Lorenzana yet been found so lost to all moral sense as to commend the piety of such infamous men. And yet, in the boldness of his enterprise, in the courage of its execution, in the amount of plunder realized, in military talent and prowess, Morgan the pirate was incalculably superior to Cortéz the hero.

* The Panama version of the story.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The new City of Mexico.—The Discoveries of Gold.—Ruins at Mexico.—The Monks, and what Cortéz gained by his Piety.—The City of Mexico again rebuilt.—The City under Ravillagigedo.—The National Palace.—The Cathedral.—A whole Museum turned Saints.—All kneel together.—The San Carlos Academy of Arts.—Reign of Carlos III.—The Mineria.

THE city of Mexico, as rebuilt by Cortéz, was but an humble affair. The small amount of plunder realized from the city destroyed; the necessity for large remittances to secure peace at the Spanish court; the general poverty and destitution of the Indians inhabiting the surrounding villages, and the narrow limits of the Aztec empire, were great impediments in the way of erecting a magnificent city. On a small scale, he resembled Santa Anna in the activity with which he could organize an army after defeat, or resuscitate affairs when apparently irretrievable. He knew how to improve the most slender means to the accomplishment of ulterior purposes. Perseverance is not one of the leading characteristics of the Spanish race, yet it is surprising to see how much they will often accomplish with what would appear to us totally inadequate means. Such was eminently the talent of Cortéz. Surrounded by disappointed men, who had been lured to the country by magnificent pictures of its resources, he still went on extending his conquests among the surrounding tribes.

Fortunately, the most precious of all metals is obtained by the most simple process, and the gold-washings of the Mescala and other parts of the south, which the Indians had but partially wrought, received more atten-

tion as soon as they learned how readily the precious metal could be exchanged for the gewgaws of the Europeans. Gold dust was greedily exchanged for its weight in bright silver coins, and an ounce of gold was not unfrequently given for a bright-colored handkerchief. In a few months the means for the organization of a community were obtained from the gold-diggings. Nothing tends so much to elevate the lowly as the discovery of gold-washings, in which individual effort, and not machinery, is the ruling power, and the producer of wealth. But even a gold country has its evils; for nowhere have I ever seen so many disappointed men as at the very place where an abundance of gold could be had for simply washing it out of the mud; and nowhere have I seen so large a proportion of unemployed men as on the spot where the wages of labor were fabulously high. Still, with all these drawbacks, the city of Cortéz rapidly progressed under the stimulus of gold discoveries, until he found the wildest of his dreams falling short of the reality.

The new city did not occupy the exact position of its Indian predecessor, but was clustered around the still remaining navigable canals, upon the southern border, while the main portion of the old city, which lay toward the northern limits of the island—where to this day such an abundant supply of earthen gods is to be found by digging—was left a mass of ruins. These were not, by any means, the ruins of fallen stone walls, or capitals, or columns, but shapeless masses of earth, which proclaim most unmistakably the kind of magnificence which distinguished the ancient capital of the Aztec empire.

The monks, who scented gold as buzzards scent carrion, began early to discover the growing wealth of this new city, and soon a party of a dozen Franciscans, in sackcloth with downcast visages, approached the city.

They came, not as religious teachers, but as spiritual scavengers, who had consecrated their lives for gold to clean out the road to heaven for the vilest sinners. Cortéz, who had been the greatest sinner, was now the greatest penitent. The whole city was moved at the coming of these holy men, who carried the cross before them, but forgot not the cards and the dice in their pockets—who daily, in the mass, consecrated spiritual bread for famishing souls, and at night spent the wages of their piety at the gambling-table. To the surprise of his fellow-profligates, and to the astonishment of the Indians, Cortéz, walking barefooted, led the procession that escorted the monks from near the spot where his brigantines had sailed among the corn-fields of Iztapalapan to the little chapel he had partly finished, and which now stands in the yard of the Franciscans.* He was so zealous in the performance of his devotions and his penances that he won the affections of the holy fathers to such a degree that he ever found faithful supporters in the powerful order of Saint Francis in all his troubles at the Spanish court. The question of his sincerity mattered little to them. It was the benefit of his public example which they, above all things, desired in their search after golden treasures. To get gold and to gratify their vices was their pious calling. Though they boast of having baptized some 6000 Indians, this argues nothing, except as it tends to show the numbers of the Indian population of the valley; for, as a badge of their subjugation, the Indians received Christian baptism; and truly it has been said of them, "They feared the Lord, but served their graven images."

We have now a sadder tale to tell; one that philan-

* As it is an unimportant question whether Cortéz first built a chapel for the Franciscans back of the Cathedral, or the one in the yard of the Franciscans, I here repeat the popular tradition.

thropists have grieved over so often. Gold-washings are soon exhausted, but they frequently lead to the discovery of silver mines, which become so profitable as to drive away the very memory of the gold-washings. Thus the fact that gold-washings ever existed in Mexico, or even in Brazil, is almost forgotten, and the places where those washings were rests in vague tradition.

But while gold is procured by the most simple process, to extract silver requires science, and an immense expenditure of labor and machinery, in delving to the very bowels of the earth, and in separating the slight percentage of pure silver from the mass of ore. In this exhausting labor, which is often assigned to convicts, Indians were employed until they gave up the ghost. The conquerors had appropriated to themselves the best-looking of the Indian females, while their husbands—for Indians marry very early in life—were consigned to the mines as laborers and carriers in the bowels of the mountain. From this promiscuous intercourse, so early introduced, has arisen the present mixed-blood population of Mexico. The offspring of sin, they are a nation of sinners. The pure Indians are the descendants chiefly of the unenslaved tribes, like the Tlascalans and Tezcucans, who carried on the subsequent wars of Cortéz, and the whites are mostly descendants of later immigrations.

In a former chapter we have seen that the evils which California suffered in the first years of its existence afflicted Mexico down to the time of the great inundation of 1629; and from the pen of an eye-witness we have given a picture of the state of society at that time. But during the five years that the water rested on the city, its superabundant wealth disappeared; many of the nobility and gentry withdrew to Puebla, carrying with them their treasures and their vices, while multitudes of the poorer classes perished. So that when the Virgin

of Guadalupe, in her great mercy to an afflicted people, caused the earth to open and swallow up the great excess of waters, they had become a sobered and a more moral population. It is from this abating of the waters in the year 1634 that we have to date the origin of the present city of Mexico; for the foundations of all the buildings except those about the Cathedral were so much softened by five years of soaking that they could not be relied on; and a new city grew up upon new foundations. This is the Mexico of the present day; a city more elegant than substantial, and dependent more upon the plaster and colored washings of its walls than solid masonry for its apparent durability.

It was the great Vice-king Ravillagigedo, toward the close of the last century (1789), who gave the finishing strokes to the city, and established its reputation as the finest city on this continent while the vice-kingdom continued. It was then one of the best-lighted cities to be found, while in its paving he expended the large sum of $347,715.* We have seen, in our own day and in our own large cities, the popular applause which follows the rigid enforcement of wholesome ordinances; and it may be well supposed that in a city like Mexico, such an unusual proceeding would elevate the fearless magistrate in popular estimation, and make him the subject of all kind of apocryphal anecdotes.

The best of the anecdotes illustrating his sternness in enforcing city ordinances is the following: A police officer once reported to him the case of the occupants of a house who had neglected sweeping in front of their premises. He informed him that the family had consisted of a widowed mother and two daughters, but that the mother had died during the previous night, and that, instead of sweeping the street as usual, the daughters

* Humboldt, *Essai Politique.*

sat at the door weeping, and soliciting money of passers-by to bury the dead body. "Return," said the viceroy sternly to the officer, "and stand at the door until there are twelve shillings (a dollar and a half) in the plate, and then take it, and bring it and the offenders to me." The officer did as directed. "Deliver the money to the municipal treasurer, in payment of the fine for violating the city ordinance," said the vice-king to the officer, "and then return to your duty." He then turned to the orphans: "I hear that your mother is dead, and that you wish to obtain the means of burying her. Here is an order on your parish priest, who will bury your mother, and here is a trifle for yourselves," he said, handing to each of them a gold ounce. They went their way, blessing the man that had succored them in their necessity. This early example of the rigid enforcement of city ordinances has never been forgotten in Mexico, where, considering its limited means, for its revenue* does not ex-

* As my readers may be a little curious to know how the city government is sustained, I translate the statement of city revenue of 1851.

There were in that year 379 licensed *pulque*-shops, yielding a revenue of	$65,297
538 retail grocer shops in which liquor is sold by the gill	25,609
8 breweries pay a city tax of	1,697
132 cafés, fondas, and eating-houses pay	4,418
Tax on grain and bread consumed in the city	53,762
Public diversions, $3103; permitted plays (not gambling), $3221	6,324
Tax on canals, $6798; tax on coaches, $20,157; markets, $56,130	83,085
Donation of the proceeds of a bull-fight	830
Gifts, in bread and meat, to the prisons	4,561
A tax of one dollar on the slaughtering of 21,984 beef-cattle	21,984
16,404 calves were slaughtered, paying six shillings tax	12,303
145,040 sheep, at one shilling and sixpence	27,194
9394 pigs paid five shillings tax, or	5,870
42,734 swine, full grown, paid six shillings	32,055
7750 goats and kids, at one shilling and sixpence	1,453
Tax on property entering the city gates	1,878
Licenses to slaughter to individuals	136

ceed $400,000, including its landed rents, its government is well sustained, and its laws better enforced than in many of our own cities. Its police consists of a military patrol,* who, oddly enough, perform the duties of lamplighters.

The National Palace is an immense structure, which occupies the eastern front of the Grand Plaza, and is sometimes foolishly called the Halls of the Montezumas. It contains within itself all the offices of government,

The water rents of $20,000 were consumed in repairs.

The tax on fish yielded	$390

The balance of the revenue consists of certain city properties.

Expenditures.

The heaviest items are for the public prisons	$69,863
For the hospitals of the insane	48,000
Lancasterian schools	3,600
Lights and city patrol	52,422
Exhibition of flowers and fruits in November last	1,831
Salaries of school-teachers, and rent of houses for schools	4,812
Religious worship in Hospital of San Hippolito, and for vaccine matter	2,282
Cleaning the streets by night and by day	21,378
Salaries	31,472
Dinners and festivals	151

The city has a debt of $617,978, and has, as a set-off, a claim against the supreme government for $1,700,000 of its funds seized from time to time, and for keeping prisoners.

* The arrests in the year 1851 were 212 men and 182 women for infractions of police regulations; 1256 men and 1944 women for excessive drinking; 384 men and 120 women for robbery; 180 men and 84 women on suspicion of robbery; 120 men and 25 women for picking pockets; 15 men and 3 women for murder; 728 men and 246 women for affrays and wounds; 209 men and 85 women for carrying forbidden weapons; 36 men who had escaped from prison; 39 men and 17 women for false pretenses; 354 men and 403 women for incontinence and adultery; 311 men and 318 women for the violation of public decency; 64 delinquent youth for the house of correction—making a total of arrests for the year of 3918 men and 3430 women; besides, they have protected 315 persons apprehensive of assaults from evil-doers. *And they have freed the city from the plague* of 6048 *dogs!* Just as many dogs arrested as human beings. These statistics furnish an inadequate idea of the number of knife-fights that are of so common occurrence among the *peons* about the *pulque*-shops, in which women and men show an equal skill at stabbing in the back.

besides the barracks of the President's guard. Besides being the city residence of the President himself, it contains the two halls that were formerly occupied by the two legislative bodies, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, while such a burlesque of our free institutions existed in Mexico. In this palace also was the National Mint, so long as any body would trust the nation with his silver bars to coin; but, now that the mint is farmed out, it is removed to a private establishment. In this building are all the archives of the vice-kingdom and the republic, and he who would study the history of the past must diligently labor here.

The Cathedral is upon the northern side of the Grand Plaza, and is said to occupy the site of the great *teocalli*, and to have a rocky foundation. Whether this last assertion is really true, I have no means of verifying, but there must be something unusual about its foundations, as its towers are the only ones that I know of in the city that do not lean a little. Ninety years was this vast edifice, or, rather, pile of edifices, in building, and the amount of treasure expended in its construction seems to a stranger to be fabulous. The best of its many fine views, or, rather, the one I admire the most, is the one from the entrance to the National Palace, though the one most commonly given is that from the front of the Municipality building, which occupies the entire south front of the Plaza.

The interior of the Cathedral is certainly imposing, but I had so early in life attached the idea of the Gothic architecture to every thing magnificent in the way of churches, that this Moro-Spanish style fails to produce an effect commensurate with the merits of the building. Again, images are not associated with my early ideas of divine worship; and when, passing from side altar to side altar, I feel that I am only looking at wax

figures, they produce no solemnity in me. And when I afterward learned, or thought I learned, that the showman of the strolling museum got his "wax figures" at the same shop, or from the same moulds in which were cast the images of the saints, they call up the idea of Punch and Judy.

Before these images I have seen hundreds of worshipers prostrate, repeating their prayers with the most profound reverence, while the sight of the image filled me with boyish glee that I could hardly suppress. The identical image that was labeled Bluebeard in the museum is now Saint Peter. The "Disconsolate Widow" is now "the Weeping Virgin." Charlotte Temple, and the baby that never knew its father, is now Mary and the infant Christ. Macbeth, looking as though he had the toothache, is Saint Francis. Othello is here a saint; and the sleeping Desdemona is now the sleeping Virgin. The monster that poisoned six husbands, and sits meditating the death of a seventh, is now dressed in the latest Paris finery, and is a saint. The old miser, who laid up such hoards while he starved himself to death, is here placed among saints; the clothes are different, but there is the same forbidding visage. Here, too, are the Queen of Sheba, the Babes in the Wood, the Belle of the West, the Terrible Brigand, and Sir William Wallace—all transformed into images of saints, before whom the people bow down with the most profound reverence, and to whose intercession they commit the salvation of their souls.

I do not know whether the showman or the priests are to blame for my irreverence, or whether it is the fault of the system itself. The argument in favor of the adoration of images is that they make impressions on the senses which aid devotion; but, if the impressions made on my senses are to be considered, the whole tendency

is to debase the immortal Maker of heaven and earth below the level of humanity, "and to change the image of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man." There was abundant proof of this in the tabernacle of our Lady of Remedies above the great altar of the Cathedral. There sits enthroned this cast-off bauble of some nursery, emblazoned with jewels enough to supply the means to educate the whole population of Mexico. To this piece of dilapidated wood and plaster of Paris are conceded attributes of God Almighty: to grant rain in times of drought; health in times of pestilence; a safe delivery to women in peril of childbirth; and before it, in times of public calamity, the highest dignitaries walk in solemn procession.

Nothing disgusts an Anglo-Saxon more than to witness the mental degradation of the descendants of the Castilians, the slaves of superstition, craft, and imposture. From generation to generation they have lived in constant fear of the secret agents of the Inquisition, and of the evil spirits that are ever plotting against the peace of good Christians. The permanency of the laws of Nature, the very foundation of all self-reliance and courage, is believed to be at the caprice of every one of a legion of saints, each of whom has been canonized on proof of working a miracle. Truth, and honesty, and chastity are subordinate virtues, and only a slavish devotion to his conscience-keeper can sustain a believer in the hour of greatest necessity.

There are important truths to be learned in Mexico, and even in this immense pile of buildings devoted to superstition. Among these is the perfect equality that should exist in a place of worship. Here the rich and the poor meet together upon a level; the well-dressed lady and the market-woman are here kneeling together before the same image. The distinctions of wealth and

rank are for the moment forgotten. While I was looking on and admiring this state of things, I saw a market-man on his return homeward with an empty hen-coop on his back. He walked boldly up, and knelt among the body of worshipers, told his beads, and then started up and trudged on his homeward journey. This equality is only for an hour, and hardly so long; yet it is an hour daily, and must have its effect in this country of inequalities in reminding the most humble that this inequality is only for this world, and that at the termination of life all will stand upon a common level.

The San Carlos, or Academy of Arts, is now in a flourishing condition, on account of the success of the lottery that supports it. The number of students here gratuitously instructed in different branches of art is quite large. Here, too, it is refreshing to see equality triumphant; the child of the *peon* and of the prince sit side by side, and on the days of public exhibition, the crowds that throng its halls are admitted gratuitously, and are of as miscellaneous a character as are its pupils. The pictures of *Pangre* are the present great attraction, and every new production of his genius gains him additional applause. The works that Humboldt so much admired are still here, but since his time there have been added several marbles of considerable merit.

This Academy of San Carlos is one of the many monuments of that greatest of the kings of Spain since the Conquest, Don Carlos III., though not brought into full operation until the reign of his imbecile successor, Carlos IV. All the monuments of which Mexico can boast at this day are traceable to the reign of the only enlightened Spanish prince of whom Spain can boast in a period of 300 years. Nearly a hundred years have elapsed since the foundation of this academy, and it has not yet produced a man of the first class either in painting or sculpture.

The College of Mines, the finest building in this city, is another exhibition of the liberal spirit which governed in the reign of Don Carlos. Under this prince a new code of mining laws had been digested, strikingly resembling the present miner's rules in California. Their immediate effect was almost to double the production of silver, while the Mineria was both a school to impart scientific knowledge in relation to mining, and a bank to advance money to develop new mineral enterprises. Its support now rests upon the tax it is authorized to levy of one shilling upon every mark ($8) of silver produced.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The National Museum.—Marianna and Cortéz.—The small Value of this Collection.—The Botanic Garden.—The Market of Santa Anna.—The Acordada Prison.—The unfortunate Prisoner.—The Causes of that Night of Terror.—The Sacking of the City.—The Parian.—The Causes of the Ruin of the Parian.—Change in the Standard of Color.—The Ashes of Cortéz.

The National Museum has its weekly exhibitions, and attracts as great a crowd of the common people as does the Academy of Arts. Here as perfect equality reigns as in the San Carlos or in the Cathedral. The first object of interest is the large collection of stone idols which have been dug up from time to time in and about the Grand Plaza. There are dog-faced idols, and apish gods, and unearthly things, besides the sacrificial stone, and a rude attempt to represent a goddess. Whether or no this was a sort of Aztec Lady of Remedies I did not learn. The Aztecs might easily have produced these works without exhibiting much civilization; but I have heard it surmised that they must have been among the plunder of more civilized tribes.

On the two opposite sides of the first hall we entered, I saw spread out the pictorial chronology of two dynasties that had passed away—the vice-regal line of potentates standing over against the royal line of Aztec emperors. The portraits of the vice-kings, from Cortéz down to the last of his successors, stretch entirely across one side of the hall, and about the same number of Indian caçiques are daubed upon a piece of papyrus that is fastened upon the opposite wall. It requires the greatest possible stretch of liberality for one accustomed to

Indian efforts of this kind to dignify such intolerable daubs with the name of paintings. And yet this is the picture-writing of the Aztecs, with which the world has been so edified for centuries. If there is or ever was an Iroquois Indian that should undertake to stain so miserably, I verily believe he would be expelled from his tribe. To make it manifest that this was intended for a chronological record of the imperial line, black lines were daubed from one of these effigies to another. From a printed label in Spanish affixed to this wonderful relic, I learned that it was intended to represent the wanderings of the Aztecs from California.

It is usual for North American Indians to store up traditions of the extensive wanderings of their ancestors, and if one is asked to represent the tradition on bark, he would produce very much such an affair as this, though with a somewhat greater resemblance to the human form. Another picture represents Marianna, the mistress of Cortéz, with her rosary, and Cortéz with his fingers in much such a position as boys place them in when they wish to convey the idea that they have perpetrated a joke—a very satisfactory method of representing the piety of Cortéz. Close by the pious couple is the representation of a scene which they seem to have come out to witness. A bloodhound is represented tearing an Indian to pieces, while a Spaniard is holding on to the end of the dog's chain.

The banner under which Cortéz fought, or rather one of them—for he had two—is here preserved in a gilt frame. It represents the Virgin Mary portrayed on crimson silk. In this hall is also a miniature representation of a silver mine, with the workmen at their several branches of labor. The remains of the vice-regal throne are here piled up in a corner.

In the next room there are some paintings of no very

great value, which should have been kept in the Academy; also a miniature fortress and a small mineral collection, and any quantity of specimens of Indian idols, so misshapen as to be unfit for use as images of the Virgin and of the saints.

As a Vice-royal and National Museum, the whole affair is beneath contempt. If the few articles in it that are valuable were divided between the Mineria and the San Carlos, and the rest thrown away, it would be an advantage to all concerned. The Indian relics in this museum are not only much inferior to the specimens of the art of the savage islanders of the South Seas, but immensely inferior to many private collections of Indian curiosities that I have seen, and they go far to demonstrate the entire absence of civilized arts among the aboriginal inhabitants of Mexico.

In an interior court of the museum is the Botanic Garden. This, like the National Museum, is a paltry affair. With the exception of the *Manolita*, or tree that bears a flower resembling the human hand, of which there are but two in the Republic, there is nothing deserving of notice in this garden. In the large interior court of San Francisco a Frenchman has, as a private speculation, opened a garden and made a collection of the national plants of Mexico that is well worth a visit. In this private garden is one of the finest and rarest collections of the cactus family that I have ever seen, either in Mexico or elsewhere.

The market of Santa Anna is the central market of the city. It adjoins the palace, and is close to the canal. The products of the chinampas are here displayed to the best advantage. As Mexico is within easy marketing distance of the hot country, we have here daily presented the fresh productions of two zones. This is one of the places where the appetite of a stranger can not only

be gratified with the greatest variety of delicacies ever collected in one spot, but the excellency and abundance of the articles presented are perplexing to the person who would venture upon the bold experiment of tasting every new article offered to him. As a vegetable and flower market, it has no equal.

The Acordada Prison is the principal state as well as city prison. Here are confined men charged with every offense, from rioting to murder. Oftentimes these extremes are found together in the interior court of the prison, where the felon, with his hands steeped in innocent blood, is entertaining a crowd of novices in crime with the details of his adventures, and of his many hair-breadth escapes from the cruel officers of the law. He is as eloquent in giving lessons to novices as his compeers in our own prisons, and he carefully instructs his hopeful pupils in the best ways of avenging their wrongs upon society. Some in the prison are merry, and enjoy a dance, while others are indulging in obscene jests and ribaldry. Still, there are those that find means to labor and to work at repairing shoes or clothes in the midst of this babel of sin and tumult.

The Acordada gave its name to that night insurrection to which I have so often referred. Two regiments of artillery, quartered in the palace of the Inquisition, *pronounced* against the legality of the election of Pedraza to the presidency. One night they took possession of the Acordada, where they were joined by the whole body of desperadoes there confined. Among the persons at that time detained in this prison, and on that night wantonly killed, was an Englishman, who had been kept in prison for several years, charged with the singular offense of having married the daughter of an ex-marquis. There had been romance in his courtship and romance in his marriage, but it had not met with the approbation of

the father, who unfortunately had influence enough to get the newly-married man into prison, and to keep him there. At last the father had relented, and on the next day the poor Englishman was to have been set at liberty. Long and trying had been the sufferings of the unfortunate man, doomed to pass the best years of his life among robbers and assassins. Though every thing that kindness could do to lighten his sufferings had been done by his own countrymen, yet the weary years of imprisonment, superadded to the sudden blasting of his hopes, had brought premature old age upon him while yet in the prime of life. But now all was forgotten in anticipation of a to-morrow that he was never to see. When the attack was made upon the prison, he went to the door of his cell to learn the cause of so unusual a disturbance, and was instantly killed—the first victim of the night of the Acordada.

On that fearful night the Acordada was unusually full of desperadoes, whom the civil disorders and stagnation of business had driven to crime. A battle in the night in the streets of a large city is a fearful thing, at least when cannon are the chief weapons used; but when there is added to this cause of alarm that the news had spread through the city that all the murderers and housebreakers in the prison had been let loose, with arms in their hands, to murder and to ravage the city, an idea may be formed of the terror of a population who were cowards by instinct. The contempt with which they had regarded the lower orders was to be fearfully retaliated. Hate, mingled with avarice, and inflamed by *pulque* and bad liquor, was to do its work, and that, too, without pity. Men, untamed by kindness of those above them, were now the masters of the lives and property of all, and there was no remedy. Fear had held the common people in a degraded position, but they feared no longer.

Those who had lorded it over the poor instead of laboring to elevate their condition, were now to suffer the consequences of that neglect.

It is a thankless task to labor for the elevation of the degraded, and oftentimes we are stung with the ingratitude of those whom we have desired to aid. But God, who has enjoined this unpleasant duty upon us, has borne our daily ingratitude without casting us off, and we but imitate him when we continue to minister to the ungrateful, and the unthankful, and even the unmerciful. The people of Mexico had shown more liberality, and given more than we. But they had not given it to educate and to elevate the condition of the poor, but to feed pampered priests, "who walked in long robes, and who loved salutations in the markets," and to women like them, who had placed themselves in an unnatural relation to the world. God requires of all men not only contributions of money, for that is but half charity, but personal services in discharge of the duties of good citizens, and in relieving the afflicted; and he that disregards such duties may suffer as the Mexicans did in the night of the Acordada insurrection, which turned young hairs gray, and destroyed forever the happiness of unnumbered families.

When the common people, brutalized by oppression, found themselves masters of the city, and their oppressors powerless, then burst forth the pent-up hatred of ten generations. "They call us *leperos* and dogs," said some of them; "let us play the part of dogs—hungry dogs, among these spotted sheep." The palaces of the great were no protection against these infuriated *peons*, and women who boasted of titles of nobility were not safe. The wealth that generations of unjust monopolists had accumulated was scattered to the winds. *Leperos* now rioted on carpets from Brussels and on cush-

ions of Oriental stuffs, and quaffed the choice wines of Madeira and Champagne. In the fury of their intoxication they lost all restraint, and indulged in every excess and enormity. Robbery and murder were the order of the day. In carrying away the plunder, disputes arose, and then they murdered each other as readily as they had murdered those who claimed the title of citizens. Fear was the only authority they had learned to respect, and they knew no other government than the hated police; but now, when the police were powerless, they could amuse themselves according to the instincts of their brutish natures. They had never been taught self-control, and animal indulgence was the utmost of their ambition, and they found amusement in violating all laws, human and divine. The murders, the ravishings, the wanton destruction of the richest household stuffs, and luxuries, and works of art in that night, can not all be written, nor can they ever be effaced from the memory of those who witnessed them.

Stretching across the Grand Plaza, opposite the Cathedral and in front of the buildings of the Municipality, once stood the noted mart of commerce called the Parian, an ill-looking structure, in which was accumulated the mass of foreign merchandise. In this same pile of buildings had been concocted the conspiracy which, in the year 1808, had caused the seizure of the Vice-king, Iturrigaray, and his imprisonment in the Inquisition. The complaint against the Vice-king was that he was about to recognize the political equality of the native-born population with the emigrants from Spain. For this offense, his reputation and that of his kindred was to be forever blackened by a suspicion of heresy.

In the night of the Acordada insurrection, the Spanish shop-keepers of the Parian found themselves utterly defenseless. They could no longer invoke the aid of the Inquisition in oppressing and trampling on the people,

whom their wantonness, and the wantonness of others like them, had brutalized. The neglect and oppression which had reduced a laboring man to a *lepero* had not made him insensible to the unequal laws which elevated above him a race of beings destitute of that manly courage which oftentimes gives plausibility to oppression. Now the lepero took delight in visiting upon the present occupants of this building a fearful punishment for the crime committed there twenty years before, and among the guilty crowd there was to be found many an innocent sufferer.

The isolated crowds that had been traversing the streets, and indulging their wantonness on a small scale, at length, as the night wore away, began to concentrate around the Parian, and quickly such devastation of property was made as might be expected where the rich and poor had no common interest in its preservation, and where criminal and poor man were almost convertible terms. The plunderers had little idea of the value or uses of the property they were scattering to the winds; and while they wasted millions worth of property, they wantonly shed the blood of the proprietors in the midst of their merchandise. Nor did the evil end when daylight appeared; for among the consequences of this night insurrection was the transfer of all authority to new hands. Those who the day before had been stigmatized with the impurity of their blood, were now the governing power, who, under the forms of law, were to carry into effect the behest of the successful insurgents. Neither the sight of the ruins of the night before, nor bales of merchandise strewed about among corpses and spattered with blood, could move the new masters of the city to pity the fallen condition of a class of men who had proved themselves too cowardly to defend their own usurpations, and too tyrannical to instill into the lately proscribed races any ideas of compassion.

For three hundred years pure white blood and Spanish birth was an indispensable qualification for promotion in the vice-kingdom, and the slightest tincture of colored blood was an indelible disgrace. But one night of tumult and rapine changed the popular standard of color. And he who had boasted the day before of his pure white blood and Spanish origin, now sought to hide himself from the officers of the law, who visited with the penalty of banishment the crime of having been born in Spain. Men now, for the first time, boasted of their Indian origin, and of the slight infusion they were able to discover of colored blood in their veins; while a man of Indian descent, and who spoke a provincial dialect, was declared elected President of the Republic of Mexico: so uncertain are all divisions of rank formed on the arbitrary distinction of color.

During the night strange murmurings were heard against "the accursed enslaver of their race." The descendants of Cortéz were fearful for the safety of his ashes, which had lain quietly in the convent of San Francisco* so long as the Inquisition possessed the power of compelling men to reverence his memory as the champion of the Cross, the favorite of the Virgin Mary, the hero of a holy war against the infidels. But now that this accursed institution, and the infamous gang connected with its management, had become powerless, the national feeling began to manifest itself so openly that the remains were removed secretly and by night to the sanctuary of the most sacred shrine of Mexico, that of Santa Teresa, where they remained until a safe opportunity presented itself for shipping them off to the Duke of Montebello, a Sicilian nobleman, who inherits the titles and also the vast estates of Cortéz in the valleys of the Cuarnavaca and Oajaca, upon which none of the revolutionary governments have laid violent hands.

* For a more authentic account, see Appendix E.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Priests gainers by the Independence.—Improved Condition of the Peons.—Mexican Mechanics.—The Oppression they suffer.—Low state of the Mechanic Arts.—The Story of the Portress.—Charity of the Poor.—The Whites not superior to Meztizos.—License and Woman's Rights at Mexico.—The probable Future of Mexico.—Mormonism impending over Mexico.—Mormonism and Mohammedanism.

THE clergy and the other white fomenters of the separation from Spain never contemplated the formation of a republic, or the arming of the *leperos*. They were alarmed at the bold reforms of the liberal Cortes of Spain, and trembled at the prospect of losing their privileges and monopolies. They judged that the safest course for them was the establishment of an empire upon the subversion of the vice-kingdom, which would be so weak a power that they could overawe it. The priests reasoned correctly, and have augmented their privileges and their wealth, as we shall presently see. The Spanish monopolists were ruined by the Revolution, as we have seen in the last chapter. But the common people were the gainers ultimately by the expulsion of the Spaniards, though the whole country suffered for a time by the withdrawal of the capital of the Spaniards. The benefit derived by the *peons* from this revolution was the political importance which it gave them. The Parian and the *lepero* perished together. The latter ceased to exist when the last stone of the former disappeared. The Spaniards had been banished from the country long before the authorities undertook the removal of this obnoxious edifice, and those who wished to avoid a like fate sought

security in acts of benevolence; so that at Mexico charitable institutions are now so well conducted, that it is one of the few Catholic cities in the world that can boast of being free entirely from beggars. Political power gave to the common people an importance in the social scale which they had never before enjoyed. With the cheapness of clothing the unclad multitude have disappeared, and the new generation find more employment and better wages than their ancestors did, when all branches of industry were clogged with monopolies, and they are, consequently, more industrious and temperate.

Still, the Mexican *peon* is immensely below the American laborer, and still has to be watched as a thief, for the want of a little morality intermixed with his religious instruction. It is a degrading sight to stand at the door of one of the large coach manufactories at Mexico, and to witness the manner in which they search them, one by one, as they come out. The natives, who have learned the most difficult parts of coach-building from English and French employers, can not for a moment be trusted, lest they should steal their tools or the materials upon which they are employed. I saw even the man who was placing the gorgeous trimmings on the Nuncio's coach carefully searched, lest he should have concealed about his person a scrap of the valuable material. That they are thieves is not to be wondered at when their catechism teaches them "that a theft that does not exceed a certain amount is not a grave offense."*

* Having lost my memorandum, I am uncertain whether the number of days was one or more, and whether the number of *francs* named was six or eight. The following is my best recollection of the question and answer on theft:

"*Q.* Is theft a grave offense?

"*A.* A theft that does not exceed in value a day's labor is not a grave offense; some theologians contend that a theft that does not exceed six francs is not a grave offense."

With us, a mechanic is associated with the idea of a person occupying a respectable position in life; but at Mexico he still belongs to a degraded class, as men are there esteemed; he is a *peon*, on a footing with a common laborer. The highest wages are three shillings a day, while at least two days in the week he is kept from his usual employment by "days of obligation," that is, festival days on which it is unlawful to work. *Tortillas*, Indian griddle-cakes, with black beans (*frijoles*) and red peppers (*chilie*), are his daily food; and his lodgings are a palm-leaf mat upon a stone or earthen floor, while his *serapa* does duty for a blanket at night. The greasy friar does not forget him as he goes his rounds in search of Peter's pence; and the priest sets before him the horrid consequences of entering Purgatory without first discharging the debt he still owes for his baptism. He and his "wife" still remain unmarried; for how can they ever raise the money to pay the priest? And if by chance he gets involved in debt, or for the debt of one of his kindred, one third part of his daily labor is embargoed by the creditor.

When the Mexican mechanic has a small kit of uncouth tools, he works upon his own account, but at the smallest possible profit. When he has finished a pair of shoes, if he be a shoemaker, he or his wife starts out to dispose of them to some passer-by in the street before a new pair is undertaken. When the tinman has finished a sprinkling pot, he or his boy walks the street till it is sold, and then perhaps a tin bath is made; and if, luckily, from a chance customer he has obtained an extra price, a *fiesta* is proclaimed to the family connection, and maybe the additional luxury of buying a ticket in the lottery of the Virgin of Guadalupe is indulged in, and a vow is made that if he wins a prize, one half of the profits of the stake shall be deposited as a gift at her shrine. In



MEXICAN WASH-HOUSE.

this way a week is passed, and it is terminated with the entire exhaustion of the little fortune of the poor mechanic. The kindred have had a time; *pulque* and liquor have been passed around freely; the women have enjoyed "equal rights" with the men; they have drunk their full share, and smoked their little cigars. The tinman, once more penniless, with an aching head, but with a light heart, returns to his little hammer, and a piece of solder and tin got on the pledge of his future earnings. Such is the condition of native Mexican mechanics, and of the mechanic arts at the capital.

The complicated machinery by which our shoes are made, or the equally complicated machinery by which tin is worked up into culinary vessels, never entered into the dreams of a Mexican mechanic. No Mexican man of science ever thought of degrading himself so low as to undertake the improvement of the mechanic arts; yet it is astonishing to see what Mexican mechanics do accomplish with their imperfect means. I have often stopped to witness the success of a poor old man building a piano, which was both skillfully arranged and well-toned, and yet the tools employed were apparently inadequate for such a purpose. In the same primitive style were coaches built before foreigners came and substituted coaches of modern pattern instead of the old, egg-formed coach-bodies of the vice-kingdom.

It may seem like trifling to be dwelling thus upon the character of the substratum of Mexican society, but it is from this very substratum that the wealth or poverty of a nation is to be traced. The sense of the dignity of labor is the foundation of American prosperity, while the degradation of the mechanics and laboring class of Mexicans is the cause of the national imbecility.

Let us look at the common people of Mexico from another point of view. I will reproduce in substance the

tale of the old Meztizo woman, who opens and shuts the great street door to all well-known inmates, by day and by night, and to such others as can give satisfactory answers. She is esteemed a lucky woman because she has the use of a small room on the ground floor for her services, where she and a number of her relatives are often hived together. Her story is very likely not true in every particular, for it can not be denied that she, like all of her class, does not consider falsehood *per se* as any other than a venial sin. How should she, considering the teaching she receives?* But the story is nevertheless, in the main, a pretty fair picture of the life of the humbler classes in republican Mexico.

She will tell you how her husband basely left her with a family of children, and took to another woman, because they were not able to pay the priest to get legally married. Her eldest son was seized and taken to the wars, where he was compelled to stand up to shoot and be shot at, to settle the question which of two sets of white men should enjoy the right of plundering the people. Whether he should hereafter be discharged honorably, or run away, or be killed in battle, it was the same to her, for the man that recruited the soldiers would know that he had once been a soldier, and would be sure to seize him first when ordered to furnish recruits; and, let what will be the course of political events, he is certainly lost to her forever.

Her eldest daughter had been a help to her. She ground corn for the *tortillas*, and could guard the house door while the old woman went to the public wash-house to wash a few shirts which gentlemen had occasionally

* I again quote the Catechism from recollection.
"*Q.* What is a venial sin?
"*A.* A lie that does not destroy charity among neighbors is a venial sin."

intrusted to her care. But a chance shot in one of the street battles had hit her, and she too was gone. Her second son had stopped too long in front of the *pulque*-shop after his day's work was finished, and was involved in a street affray, in which knives were drawn, and a man killed. Whether he was the guilty one or not, it mattered little, as he was the first to fall into the hands of the officers. For a long time he had been kept in the chain-gang, but lately he had been sent to the silver mines, where he would probably end his days carrying ore on his back like a beast of burden, a thousand feet under ground.

She had a second daughter, old enough to carry food to her son while he was in prison, and to lighten his misery by a daily visit while he belonged to the chain-gang. But since he has been taken from the city, they two are left alone in the world. She has now no money, or she would get her daughter married, as the priest would trust her if she would only pay a small part of the fee. Still she is considered fortunate; for, having the reputation of an honest women, she has got a portress's situation, and little means are thrown in her way by which she obtains a comfortable living. But her relatives, who are poorer than herself, sympathize with her, and come and eat up her *tortillas*.

Such is the substance of many a tale of misery, if you will stop and listen to the pictures which the lowly draw of their condition in any of the Mexican cities. Often they are fabricated, but very often they are true. The old woman who tells you a tale to excite your sympathies has perhaps only borrowed a tale of misfortune which she has heard her neighbor tell. Those who reproach these poor unfortunates with being beggars, thieves, and liars, forget that they have been made such by oppression. The greatest amount of suffering caused

by the civil wars falls upon the poor; and among the suffering poor, the women are the greatest sufferers. If they are more intemperate than the men, it is their misfortunes, too often, that have driven them to seek a temporary solace in *pulque*. The slight hold they have on their husbands is the cause of their jealousy, and if they take part in bloody affrays, it is because they are under the influence of intoxication, and not from any inherent inclination to cruelty.

Never did a white skin cover a kinder heart than that of the poor Meztizo women of Spanish America. Their primitive hut by the wayside is as much at your service as your own castle, and you are heartily welcome to their humble fare. I never was so unfortunate as to need their assistance, but I have often been astonished at the ready charity of the poor to those poorer than themselves. I once encountered an Irishman who had begged his way from the Gulf coast almost to the Pacific, and I was greatly surprised at the cheerfulness with which a poor widow woman, keeper of a *venta*, accepted of a blessing instead of more tangible coin for a night's entertainment. In delicate health always, and not without a full share of experience among strangers, I know full well how to appreciate the kind offices which a woman only can render. When death stared me in the face, and she could do nothing for a perishing heretic except to solicit a passing procession to chant a *misericordia por un infirmo Americano*, that kindly office was not wanting. When, with returning health, I ventured out into the street, leaning upon a staff, a poor Indian woman, forgetting her native shyness, begged me to sit down under the shade of her roof while she prepared for me a little orange-water, and when, a little refreshed by her orange-water, I tottered on, I shall never forget the look of sympathy which she bestowed upon an unknown

stranger. An Indian woman is always kind, but the kindest of her race is the poor despised Indian woman of Spanish America.

It is too common to look down coldly, and not unfrequently with contempt, upon those who occupy the humbler walks of life, and to speak only of their vices. The *peon* has his vices, and they are glaring enough, but he is certainly not worse than his white neighbor. I had been so long in California, and had seen so many exhibitions of courage in street-fights and personal encounters, that I had come almost to consider the words white man and brave man as synonymous. But when I found myself in Mexico at the breaking out of a civil war, I soon learned that white men are not always brave, and that they were superior to the Indian in little else except in the gilding with which they covered their vicious and corrupt lives. They borrow their customs from Paris and their style of living, but their morals are even below the Paris standard of virtue.

The law, which sinks the civil existence of the wife in the husband, and which charges the husband with liability for the debts and trespasses of the wife, is sometimes stigmatized as harsh, unnatural, and tyrannical. If those that consider it so could for a little while enjoy the matrimonial freedom of Mexico, they would soon discover abundant reason for praising the wisdom of our ancestors in hedging about with so many disabilities an institution which is both the safeguard of public morality and of our free government. Family government, self-government, and political freedom dwell together; while despotism and family license are inseparable. At Mexico, old family relations are not broken up by new marriages. Household family worship is unknown, but, like so many pagans, each one trudges off to say her prayers separately, and at a favorite shrine. The wife

has her separate property and interests, which she manages with the aid of her "next friend." The husband, too, has his separate interests, and too often his "next friend" is his neighbor's wife.

After my return from Mexico, I heard a woman in a public assembly advocating, as social reforms, the institutions of a country in a state of moral and political decomposition. I felt like exclaiming, "Cursed be that woman who would introduce into our happy country the social customs of paganism; and cursed be that people who listen to her infidelity!" May a like evil fall upon those legislative tinkers who have deprived the husband of the power of creating a trust for the protection and support of his wife in time of necessity.

We have examined sufficiently the social condition of Mexico to show that there is no natural sympathy between the whites and the colored races, or the governing and governed races of Mexico. For a brief period, indeed, Guerrero, a man of Indian descent, occupied the presidency; but he was deposed and murdered, and the government has ever since been in the hands of the whites. The present Pinto war in the southwest looks toward again reviving the Indian rule. It is carried on too languidly to promise success, as there seems to be no one in the movement possessed of the energy of that Indian drummer, Carrera, who usurped the supreme power in Guatemala. On the other hand, Mexico is like a ripe pear, ready to fall into the lap of any unscrupulous adventurer who chooses to make common plunder of its churches, its church jewels, and the inordinate private fortunes of its priesthood and nobility.

There is a rising cloud that is gathering blackness in the northwest, and must sooner or later precipitate itself, and with the force of a tempest sweep away—to use the words of General Tornel—in one mighty flood "the religion, language, and national existence of the Mexi-

cans." This is Mormonism. I have watched this delusion from its rise, near my own residence in Western New York, and followed its advancing progress, until, from a little rill, it has become a mighty torrent—a political element so potent that its existence in the United States is now scarcely tolerable. Where can it go except it precipitate itself upon the territories of imbecile Mexico? To such a sect of fanatics Mexico can present no opposition. It must surrender to Brigham Young and to his followers their wealth, their images, their wives and their daughters, as the Aztecs surrendered all to Cortéz.

I have often traced the close analogy between the rise of Mormonism and that of Mohammedanism, as well as the striking similarity that exists between these two systems of false religion. Each one is founded, after a fashion, on the Bible, to which each has supplemented a volume of miserable fables, the one called the Book of Mormon, and the other the Koran. Each has a spurious prophet, who is exalted above the prophets of Scripture. Both systems permit polygamy, and both are most ultra-Protestant in relation to the forms and ceremonies, images and pictures of the Oriental and Latin churches. And as God sent the great Mohammedan imposture to punish the corrupt Christianity of a former age, so in like manner He may soon commission Mormonism to wipe out of existence the corrupt Christianity of Mexico. Mormonism has not yet developed a military character, because it would be madness to raise an arm against the United States. But when it shall have once passed the frontier and entered the dominions of a feeble state, then we shall see how keen an edge fanaticism can give to the sword in the hands of men naturally courageous, when the double motive is held out of a new supply of wives, and the inexhaustible treasures of the churches to stimulate their fanaticism.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Plaza of the Inquisition.—The two Modes of human Sacrifice, the Aztec and the Spanish.—Threefold Power of the Inquisition.—Visit to the House of the Inquisition.—The Prison and Place of Torture.—The Story of William Lamport.—The little and the big *Auto da Fe*.—The Inquisition the real Goverment.—Ruin of Spanish Nationality.—The political Uses of the Inquisition.—Political Causes of the Bigotry of Philip II.—His eldest Son dies mysteriously.—The Dominion of Priests continues till the French Invasion.

THE *Plazuelo* or *Plazuelito*, the "Little Plaza" of the Inquisition, is now, as it ever has been, a market-place —the Smithfield of Mexico. On Sundays and all other market-days, there is here an abundant supply of flowers, meats, and vegetables. On great holidays, in the times of the vice-kings, the scene was changed. Fruits and vegetables were, for the time, placed in the background, and an act of "faith" (*auto da fe*), or burning of heretics, was offered as a public spectacle. The grandest of all the bull-fights of Mexico was nothing in comparison with this vice-regal exhibition. As among the Aztecs and the pagan Romans, the sacrificial victims were kept in reserve for important occasions, and for occasions when a bull-fight would have been a most inadequate exhibition. The consecration of a new archbishop, or the arrival of a new Vice-king from Spain, or the marriage of a member of the royal family, or some similar important political or religious event, could only call forth this extraordinary show of roasting men alive.

If we are to believe the statements of Cortéz and Bernal Diaz,* the Aztecs were accustomed to offer human

* The defense of the invasion of Mexico by Cortéz in time of peace, and reducing the Aztecs to slavery, rests on the ground that the Aztecs were monsters.

sacrifices on festival days upon a large circular stone still preserved. With an obsidian knife, life was instantly extinguished by opening the heart-case and taking out the heart, which was offered to their god of war. This horrid worship, if indeed it ever existed, was suppressed, and one more horrid and cold-blooded in its atrocities substituted. There was seldom wanting a victim on those great occasions, for prisoners who would otherwise have been let off with confiscation of estates and a long imprisonment were now doomed to the flames, to accomplish the double purpose of a spectacle and strike terror into the ranks of the higher classes, who too often furnished the victims. But the higher classes were all present. Suspicion might attach to their absence. And he that dared not breathe aloud in his own bed-chamber, or tell the whole truth at the confessional, from apprehension of an inquisitorial spy, took good heed that no act or look of his on the day of the great fiesta should betray him to this secret, but every where present tribunal, lest he himself should be the sacrificial victim at the next entertainment.

The roasting of a human victim at the *auto da fe* was a purely democratic institution. The *leperos*, who were beneath the jurisdiction of the Inquisition, felt none of the terrors that haunted the rich even in night visions. Without the least apprehension, they enjoyed the magnificence of the spectacle, and their hatred toward the high-born was gratified by the sight of one, and sometimes many, respectable persons burned in the fire for their entertainment. They were always ready to manifest their gratitude to the holy office by assailing and perhaps murdering any one who had incurrred the displeasure of the priests, but whom it was not politic to arrest. Thus, by a threefold power, did the Inquisition

enforce the discipline of the Church: by the authority of the king and the law, the dread which it inspired; the sympathies of a rabble, whom it was their interest to keep brutalized; and the religious sentiment of the nation, so far as there was any. But this last was a very uncertain reliance, for the same law which makes heresy a crime, legalizes hypocrisy, and the inquisitor cared very little for the thoughts of men so long as they remain unuttered; and as no two men think alike, the crime of heresy appears to consist in expressing too frankly the logical deductions of the understanding upon the all-important subject of religion. To speak disrespectfully of the holy office, the Inquisition, was the worst of heresy.

The north front of the Plazuelo of the Inquisition, now generally called the Plaza of the Dominicans, is occupied by the great yard of the Dominican convent, which is separated by a high wall from the Plaza, and by a street from the buildings of the Inquisition. Within this yard there is a large flagstone, with a hole in its centre, which stone, on days of the *auto da fe*, used to be brought out into the Plaza, and, with iron post, neck-ring, and chain attached, constituted the simple apparatus for the human sacrifice. The Dominican fathers have carefully laid aside the iron post, with its ring and chain, and perhaps, with them, the most valuable of the instruments of torture, which were removed from the Inquisition building. As there are two classes of bull-fights, the ordinary and the grand bull-fight, so there was the ordinary *auto da fe*, performed in this Little Plaza, and the grand act of faith, *auto da fe general*, which ordinarily ought to come off in the Grand Plaza of the city, in front of the vice-regal palace.

Seeing the great door open as I was passing, I ventured to enter the central court of the Inquisition, from

which the halls of the different tribunals and the chambers of the inquisitors and officials were entered and lighted. All had now been thoroughly whitewashed and renovated, and bore no marks of the fearful scenes that had been here enacted. When I stood in the hall where its judgments used to be delivered, I had to tax my memory of books to draw a picture of events that here daily transpired in times past. I saw no Bridge of Sighs, yet the whole institution was founded upon the sighs, and groans, and riven hearts of its victims, of many of whom the world was not worthy. The rich were the most profitable game, but a beautiful woman was the most acceptable spectacle to a populace debased from infancy by attendance on bull-fights. A foreigner that had been by special grace licensed to visit Mexico, was considered a fortunate prize, for to offer a foreigner as a human sacrifice was in accordance with the ancient custom of the Aztecs. There was only one foreigner who amassed great wealth, and that was Laborde the miner, who bought his peace by building the Cathedral of Toluca.

There was nothing to interest a stranger in the empty halls where once these legalized murderers had held their nightly meetings, and I wandered away toward the prison and the place of torture, where, inch by inch, the life had been torn from the victims of priestly vengeance. I shuddered as I entered the prison door-way, though fifty years had passed since the last and most distinguished of its victims had entered here, the Vice-king Iturrigaray. Here, too, the hand of the white-washer had been busy, and the cells were now made comfortable rooms for the soldiery. The instruments of torture were all carefully removed from the place of torture, and the room bore no marks of the shocking scenes which had here so often transpired. Here poor Ramé, the

Frenchman, had dragged out his long imprisonment, and here William Lamport, the unfortunate Irish victim, prepared himself for death. But Lamport's story is worth giving in full, to illustrate the scenes.

William Lamport was an Irishman by birth, and must have been a Roman Catholic, or he could not have obtained a license to visit Mexico. He was probably one of that large class of Irish Catholics who emigrated to Spain in order to enjoy their religion more freely than they could at home, under English oppression. It was probably two intercepted letters that cost this Irishman his life. His accusation sets forth that he was the author of two writings, in one of which "things were said against the Holy Office, its erection, style, mode of process, &c., in such a manner that, in the whole of it, not a word was to be found that was not deserving of reprehension, not only as being injurious, but also insulting to our holy Catholic faith." The Prosecuting Attorney (*fiscal*) says of the other writing "that it contained detestable bitterness of language, and contumelies so filled with poison as to manifest the heretical spirit of the author, and his bitter hatred against the Holy Office." Let his fate be a warning to all traveling letter-writers who are disposed to criticise too severely "the erection and style" of a very awkward-looking building, and the mode of process therein used in condemning men to the flames. Probably, before he got through with his intercourse with the Inquisition, he many times wished himself back under the liberal government of the Anglo-Saxon oppressors of his country!

It was a delightful day in the year 1569, when the most splendid *auto da fe* that ever took place in Mexico was celebrated upon the occasion of the burning of Lamport. A throne had been placed for the Vice-king, and conspicuous seats were prepared for the *audiencia*. All the offi-

cials of the city and of the department were present to add importance to the grand performance ("*funcion*"). Not less brilliant was the display which the whole body of the priesthood made upon the occasion. The Archbishop, as spiritual Vice-king, displayed a bearing that dazzled the populace, while his attendant clergy, with the whole body of the monastic orders, added immensely to the grand spectacle. The procession, headed by the Grand Inquisitor and his subordinates, was followed by the officials and familiars, while the poor Irishman walked with his eyes raised to Heaven, for the purpose, said the priests, "of seeing if the devil, his familiar, would come to his assistance."* The sermon and the ordinary exercises, including the oath administered to all the dignitaries present to support the Holy Office, were spun out to an unusual length, so that it proved to be a protracted meeting, as well as the greatest festival the Mexicans ever witnessed since the time that Montezuma offered human sacrifices. But in the midst of the preliminary exercises Lamport escaped burning alive, for when his neck had been placed in the ring, he let himself fall and broke his neck, so that the crowd were compelled indignantly to put up with burning of the dead body of a heretic. The unbeliever cheated them out of half their expected sport.

It may look like wandering from the main topic of discussion to devote a chapter to an institution which has ceased to exist for forty years. But no one can fully comprehend the social and political character of the diverse and conflicting nationalities and discordant elements that for three hundred years constituted the Spanish empire without fully understanding the character and workings of the Inquisition, which, from "the Council of the Supreme" in Spain, extended, with its compli-

* Though I do not entirely follow Pinblanch, yet I give him as authority for this incident.

cated ramifications, through all the provinces, and penetrated every social organization in Europe and America,* and even to the most distant East India possessions, binding all the several parts together as the nervous system does the parts of the human body; or rather by external

* Mr. Gayarre, who, under a commission from the State of Louisiana, is examining the colonial records at Madrid, has discovered the evidence of an attempt made to introduce the Inquisition into New Orleans even after our people had begun to settle there. This is his statement:

"It appears," says Gayarre, "that soon after the death of Charles III., an attempt was made to introduce the much-dreaded tribunal of the Inquisition into the colony. The reverend Capuchin, Antonio de Sedella, who had lately arrived in the province, wrote to the Governor to inform him that he, the holy father, had been appointed Commissary of the Inquisition; that in a letter of the 5th of December last, from the proper authority, this intelligence had been communicated to him, and that he had been requested to discharge his functions with the most exact fidelity and zeal, and in comformity with the royal will. Wherefore, after having made his investigations with the utmost secresy and precaution, he notified Miro that, in order to carry, as he was commanded, his instructions into perfect execution in all their parts, he might soon, at some late hour of the night, deem it necessary to require some guards to assist him in his operations.

"Not many hours had elapsed since the reception of this communication by the Governor, when night came, and the representative of the holy Inquisition was quietly reposing in bed, when he was roused from his sleep by a heavy knocking. He started up, and, opening his door, saw standing before him an officer and a file of grenadiers. Thinking that they had come to obey his commands, in consequence of his letter to the Governor, he said, 'My friends, I thank you and his Excellency for the readiness of this compliance with my request. But I have now no use for your services, and you shall be warned in time when you are wanted. Retire, then, with the blessing of God.' Great was the stupefaction of the friar when he was told that he was under arrest. 'What!' exclaimed he, 'will you dare lay your hands on a Commissary of the holy Inquisition?' 'I dare obey orders,' replied the undaunted officer, and the reverend Father Antonio de Sedella was instantly carried on board of a vessel, which sailed the next day for Cadiz.

"Rendering an account of this incident to one of the members of the cabinet of Madrid, Governor Miro said, in a dispatch, 'the mere name of the Inquisition uttered in New Orleans would be sufficient not only to check immigration, which is successfully progressing, but would also be capable of driving away those who have recently come, and I even fear that in spite of my having sent out of the country Father Sedella, the most fatal consequences may ensue from the mere suspicion of the cause of his dismissal.'"

folds, as the anaconda does its victim. The Inquisition was emphatically the nervous system of the Spanish monarchy. From the time of Philip II. to the last of her kings, Spain had but one monarch that could have escaped a lunatic asylum on a commission *ad inquirendo*, and not a single royal family in all that time that had not at least one judicially declared idiot in the household; and more than once it was the regular successor to the throne. And yet this ingeniously contrived craft of priests held all most firmly together, and made it capable of resisting every outside pressure until the French imperial armies entered Madrid.

When French gunpowder was applied to the Holy Office, the Spanish empire lost its nationality, and its different parts fell to pieces like a rope of sand, and revealed to the world the sad truth that the Spanish race, whether in the Peninsula or in the colonies, was now incapable of self-government. The Inquisition had consumed its powers of vitality. So long accustomed to submit to and lean upon despotic authority, its various nationalities had lost the power of self-support. Spain, from the earliest historical periods, had ever been the victim of foreign colonial despotisms or imported tyrants until Philip II., under whom the Inquisition becoming firmly established, it thenceforward continued a Catholic province of the Roman Church, until Rome and the Papal Spanish empire fell together by the hands of Napoleon. From that time onward, Spain and all her former provinces have continued the sport of military insurgents—a melancholy evidence of the mental, physical, and moral ruin that overtakes a country abandoned to the despotism of priests.

Though the origin of the Inquisition of Spain is familiar to all, yet few are accustomed to look upon it in its political bearings. The "pious" Isabella, or, as she

is called by the descendants of the Moriscoes, "Isabella the Accursed," is conceded to have been the founder of the modern Inquisition, and yet her great piety did not prevent her from giving a death-blow to the *Fuero* of Castile, the most liberal government of Europe except that of Aragon. The popularity which she acquired by the conquest of Granada, the religious furor excited by that successful war, and the union with Aragon, enabled her to establish the Inquisition. By means of her priests associated in its gloomy tribunals she was able to suppress popular rights. A shadow of the *Fueros* of Catalonia, Valencia, and Aragon still remained, but she had sapped the foundation on which they rested by the establishment of the Holy Office. Charles V. was sufficiently powerful to disregard such humble instrumentalities in carrying out any purpose he deemed to be of advantage to his states. He was not a bigot by education, and we have to look to disappointed ambition as the cause of the virulence with which he persecuted the least indication of heresy. He had been thwarted in his ambitious schemes; this he attributed to the Reformation, which he himself had fostered at its beginning, in order to sow discord among the princes of Germany. He had hoped that upon their mutual jealousy he might establish despotic authority; but the treason of Maurice of Saxony had subverted his darling scheme at the moment of its apparent success, and in disgust he retired from public life to spend the remainder of his days in recruiting his health and cursing the heretics.

The Inquisition burned with renewed flames under Philip II. from precisely the same cause that had made it tolerable to his father. To the troubles caused by the Reformation he attributed the election of his uncle Maximilian "King of the Romans," and his own consequent loss of the Germanic empire. But, as a compen-

sation for this loss, he had substantially acquired England by his marriage with Queen Mary, and had the satisfaction of having his soldiers mingled with those of England in his war against France, and of seeing his own Archbishop of Toledo preside in the tribunal that condemned to the flames the Protestant bishops of England. The *autos da fe* of Smithfield were weeding out heresy and liberty from England, which he already began to look upon as a province of his empire, when his wife died, and the avowed heresy of Elizabeth blasted his hopes in that quarter. The heretic Prince of Nassau had raised insurrection in the Netherlands, which deprived him of Holland. When the French Catholic League, which he had so long subsidized, was about to declare him, or at least his daughter, sovereign of France, the relapsed heretic, Henry IV., blasted this hope by laying siege to Paris. On the side of the Catholic states of Europe his affairs went on most prosperously. He had acquired Portugal, with all her American and East India provinces. But in these new acquisitions he was not safe from the assaults of the heretics. The Dutch robbed him of Brazil, and of the Cape of Good Hope, and of the islands of Ceylon and Java in the East Indies. When his missionary emissaries had excited an insurrection by which he might have acquired Japan in a religious war, the Dutch were there with their ships, and, laying them alongside the rebel camp, they cannonaded it, while the imperial army on the land side utterly destroyed together emissary priests and rebels, and forever excluded Spain and her emissaries from the islands, and even England after the negotiation of a Spanish marriage. Nor were his treasure-ships safe from these audacious Dutch, who prowled about the West Indies and seized his galleons. The ships from Goa, laden with the treasures of the East, had to take a circuitous

route to avoid the Dutch, who were continually on the look-out at the Cape of Good Hope. As if this was not enough, the failure of his great armada sent against England, and the ravaging of his own coasts by Essex, increased his hatred against the heretics to something like a mania.

These are sufficient reasons for accounting for the zeal of Philip II. on the subject of religion, and his blindness to the consequences of thus abandoning his empire and his people as common plunder to a merciless horde of plunderers, who bound his empire most firmly together, but it was in the bands of national ruin. This, too, may account for his often-repeated remark that he would not shield his own son if he should incur the censure of the Inquisition. When his eldest son and heir openly avowed his hatred to the Inquisition, we find him dying a mysterious death. It has already been remarked that there can be no such thing as reliance upon historical truth in a country where the Inquisition is in full authority. But it does not follow from this that we ought to adopt the popular surmise that Philip was privy to the murder of his son, or even that he was actually murdered. It may have been a murder, as the inquisitorial assassins were numerous, or it may have been a natural death, as represented in books that have been published by permission of the censors. All that we know is, that his death happened advantageously for the continuance of the Holy Office.

Philip III. can hardly be considered an accountable being. The same may be said of his son and of his son's sons, to say nothing of those heirs to the Spanish crown that were legally adjudged idiots. The nominal father of Charles III., though he was King of Spain, must be considered as not merely bordering on idiocy, but as actually a man of unsound mind. Charles III., though

he had courage to drive from his dominions the Jesuits, dared not undertake a reform of the clergy. We may conclude this chapter by saying that the Inquisition had its origin in political considerations, or in the revengeful feelings of really great sovereigns of Spain, and that its continuance was owing to the weakness or impotency of their successors; and though it was the terror of all classes above the street rabble, it was too powerful to be suppressed before the emancipation of the people which followed the French invasion. Such is the fate of a race over whom priests have once acquired dominion.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Miracles and Earthquakes.—The Saints in Times of Ignorance.—The Eruption of Jorullo.—The Curse of the Capuchins.—The Consequences of the Curse.—The unfulfilled Curse.—The Population of the Republic.—Depopulation from 1810 to 1840.—The Mixture of Whites and Indians not prolific.—The pure Indians.—The Meztizos.—The White Population.—Negroes and Zambos.—The Jew and the Law of Generation.—The same Law applies to Cattle.—It governs the Generation of Plants.—Intemperance and Generation.—Meztizo Plants short-lived.—Mexico can not be resuscitated.—She can not recover her Northern Provinces.

EARTHQUAKES are, and ever have been, very frequent through the whole of Mexico. Yet they have never been very severe, particularly at the city, as is demonstrated by the very existence of a city upon such a mass of soft earth as I have shown in a former chapter constitutes the foundation of Mexico. A reasonable amount of hard shaking would dislocate its muddy basis and engulf the city. Now and then some unusually frail structure is toppled down, and the church steeples are swayed a little this way or that, but the cement that sustains them has heretofore proved sufficiently cohesive to save them from being shaken to pieces or tumbled down.* Some ten years ago, the convent church, in which was the miraculous image of our Saviour, was thrown down, and the image that had annually poured forth its precious blood for the healing of the spiritual and temporal maladies of

* An attempt was made to explain away the story of Cortéz getting drowned out at Iztapalapan, a point above the level of the city of Mexico, by suggesting that *perhaps* an earthquake may have changed the face of the valley. But, unfortunately, Iztapalapan was the southern support of the old Indian levee (*calzado*), built to keep the water off of the city of Mexico in seasons of heavy rains.

all pious believers was buried under the ruins. But this calamity was only a precursor of a greater miracle; for, on removing the rubbish, the sacred image was found intact, and as ready as ever to bleed again to order for ready pay. The spiritual interpretation of this astounding phenomenon was, that the devil, in his malice, had attempted, as of old, to crush the miraculous power of the Saviour; and now, again, as upon the high mountain, he was foiled, and the flow of blood was not intermitted.

Miracles have ever been the most fruitful source of profit that the Church enjoys, for at the annunciation of every new miracle the faithful are quickened to devotion and to contributions, which, above all things, is to be desired by the "impoverished Church" of Mexico.* An earthquake is always a windfall or a godsend to the priesthood. An outsider is often surprised at the number of miracles that, in old times, were connected with earthquakes. But rarely do we hear of modern miracles. The spirit of miracles works only in times of most profound ignorance; and experience has convinced the Church that the only prospect of the continuation of miraculous visitations of the holy Apostles and of the Virgin in Mexico, depends upon the continuation of the people in the most profound ignorance, and in childlike obedience to their spiritual superiors. So long as this state of things continued, the holy Virgin was ever present among them, performing the most astounding cures, and even, upon one occasion, causing the ground to open and swallow up the surplus waters of the valley, to the relief of the "most devout people of Mexico," besides performing other astounding miracles, that have been duly attested by Pope, prelates, and the Council of Rites.

* Though the richest ecclesiastical quasi-corporation in the world, your ears are constantly saluted with solicitations for contributions to the impoverished Church.

But now, since the education of the common people has been attempted, although on a very limited scale, and men are allowed to speak openly, the most holy Virgin of Guadalupe has withdrawn her wonder-working power from an unbelieving people, while the blind, the halt, the lame, the palsied, and the diseased crowd around her shrine, not to obtain her healing mercy, but to solicit charity. The saints, also, have ceased to stir up the elements, so that volcanic fires have ceased throughout the whole limits of the republic, and earthquakes have almost forgotten to perform their annual duty of shaking the earth.

The last volcanic eruption in Mexico was one of the most astounding of which the record has come down to us, whether in Mexico or in any other country. Fortunately, we have reliable evidence in relation to this event, for Humboldt not only surveyed the volcano as it appeared in his day, but, from eye-witnesses of the first eruption, learned the incidents that fill out the history, and also the miraculous cause which is assigned for this mighty convulsion of nature. His story I shall follow in preference to the popular tradition of the awful consequences that succeeded the curse pronounced by two Capuchin friars upon the estate of Jorullo.

Just one hundred years ago, which was fifty years before the time of the visit of Humboldt, two Capuchin friars came to preach at the estate which occupied the beautiful valley of Jorullo. This valley was situated between two basaltic ridges, and was watered by two small streams of limpid water, the San Pedro and the Cuitamba. These small parallel rivers furnished an abundant supply of water, which was well employed in irrigating flourishing sugar and indigo plantations. These Capuchins, not having met with a favorable reception at the estate of San Pedro, poured out the most hor-

rible imprecations against the beautiful and fertile plains, foretelling that, as the first consequences of their curse, the plantation would be swallowed up by flames rising out of the earth, and that afterward the neighboring mountains would forever remain covered with snow and ice. After denouncing the curse, the two holy men went on their way.

On the night of the 28th and 29th of September, 1759, horrible subterraneous noises were heard, which had been preceded by slight shocks of an earthquake since the June preceding. The affrighted Indians fled to the Aquasareo, and soon thereafter a tract of land twelve miles square, which now goes by the name of the "evil land" (*mal pais*), rose up in the form of a bladder, and boiled, and seethed, and bubbled like a caldron of pudding, shooting up columns of fire from ten thousand orifices. Sometimes a number of orifices would unite into one vast crater, and vomit forth such a column of fire as was never before seen by human eyes since the time when "the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."

Intelligent witnesses assured Humboldt that flames were seen to issue forth, which, from a surface of more than a mile square, cast up fragments of burning rock to a prodigious height. The two small rivers were swallowed up, and their decomposed waters added fuel to the flames, which burned for many months with a fierceness that is indescribable.

Such is the origin of the volcano of Jorullo, in the State of Michoican, and such is the pretended consequence of a curse pronounced by Capuchin monks upon one of the most beautiful estates in the country; and for generations since, the dread of incurring the displeasure of strolling vagabond monks has rested like a blight upon the common people; and yet this is but one of the

thousand ways by which the Mexican priesthood play upon the credulity of the ignorant in a country where convulsions of nature are matters of almost ordinary occurrence. Every extraordinary event in nature is ascribed to the exercise of supernatural power on the part of the clergy or the most holy images of the Church.

The fires of Jorullo have ceased to burn for half a century. The central crater that was eventually formed, and the numerous little orifices of fire, have long since become cold, and all the evidences of an active fire have passed away. But to this day the Indians watch the progress of the cooling process; as they anticipate that, before many years have passed, the unfulfilled portion of the curse will be realized, and that those now live who will see the surrounding mountains covered by perpetual snow—an evil which the half-clad Indians of the tropics appear to dread more than perpetual fire.

The last and only enumeration of the inhabitants of Mexico or New Spain was made in 1794, by that distinguished Vice-king to whom I have so often referred, Ravillagigedo. This enumeration gave as the actual population 3,865,529, besides the departments of Vera Cruz, Guanajuato, and Cohahuila, which were estimated to contain 518,000 more, making a sum total of 4,412,529. Since that time there has been a great deal of extensive guessing, until by this simple process the population was brought up to 7,661,520, in 1853.* The process by which this increase is effected is to add one sixth for supposed omissions in the census, and a like number for supposed increase in the subsequent fifteen years till the breaking out of war, and taking for granted that the population has not retrograded during forty-five years of intermittent war. Such conclusions are made in violation of all the laws of population.

* *Colleccion de Leyes*, p. 184.

It may not be uninteresting to my readers to run over the laws which regulate the decrease of population, although it is too much our custom to look only at the other side of the picture. The social and civil wars of Mexico have been of such a character, as we have seen, as to warrant the belief that from this cause alone population must have constantly diminished, from their very commencement in 1810 until 1840, when matters were comparatively resuscitated. The employment for labor during the time that the large estates were neglected, and while the canals of irrigation and the silver mines were in ruins, was of the most limited character; and the very indigent circumstances to which it reduced the majority of those who ranked above the *leperos* must also have diminished the population of the republic much below that of the vice-kingdom under Ravillagigedo.

Since 1840, notwithstanding the frequent wars, Mexico, in favored localities, may have slightly increased in population; but this increase is more than balanced by the Indian wars of the northern departments, which have depopulated large tracts of country, sometimes extending across one tier of states even into the heart of Durango and Guanajuato; so that I hazard nothing in affirming that the population of the whole country must be less to-day than it was in 1794, notwithstanding that Humboldt sets down an estimate of 5,800,000 for the year 1803, and 6,500,000 for the year 1808. I might go farther, and affirm that the constant insecurity of life and property in all but the central parts of the republic is such as to keep down the natural increase of a population never prolific, being made up of a combination of uncongenial races—whites and Indians, whose intermixture leads to sterility.

The census shows two fifths of the population to be pure Indians, mostly laborers: this class would have

been the one most likely to have increased since the Revolution, had there remained the same amount of employment and wages as formerly. In consequence of the abolition of monopolies, the articles necessary for the comforts of life became much cheaper and more easy of attainment to the laboring classes, which would tend to increase the number of this class. These Indians, moreover, had remained to a great extent free from the deleterious intermixture of white blood. But the pure Indian, compared with the pure Caucasian, is a race, under the most favorable circumstances, of slow increase. The diseases hereditary among the Indians are aggravated by promiscuous marriages, so that in California the missionaries used to inquire diligently after a man's family connections, and compel a convert to marry into his own clan, or not marry at all.

The Meztizos, or mixed races, constitute another two fifths of the population. This is a less vigorous race than the pure Indian. They are all the children of sin, mostly the offspring of illicit intercourse, and are for this cause a feebler race than the offspring of the same mixture where the man was only blessed with a single wife. As all marriage of whites with Indians in New Spain was unlawful, these Meztizos bore the same relation to the law in New Spain which the mulattoes do in our Southern States.

The whites were set down at one million, or about one fifth of the whole population, at the most prosperous period of the vice-kingdom. I doubt if they now amount to half or even a quarter of that number, and of this population there is a very vigorous French immigration, now amounting to five or six thousand, and about as many Germans, a handful of English, and still less Americans. The native white population does not possess the physical energy requisite for rapid increase. They form no

portion of the laboring people; they live in effeminacy, and their children are not nursed at the healthy breasts of athletic negresses, as are the children of our Southern planters, but are suckled by a more enervated race than themselves, viz., the Meztizos. The emigration from Spain was never an emigration of laboring men. It consisted almost entirely of priests, stewards, clerks, and taskmasters, to whom labor was considered as degrading. When the Spaniards lost a monopoly of these employments, and sank to the level of the native races, their numbers rapidly declined. The slight foreign immigration above mentioned is not one of laborers, for labor is considered an unbecoming employment at Mexico for white men, but an immigration of tradesmen and shop-keepers, who add nothing to the material wealth of the country.

Of the Mexican Negro race I never knew but two, and one of them held the post of captain in the army, and the other was the naked alcalde, mentioned in a former chapter, who was discharging the functions of "Judge of First Instance." The reasons assigned for the disappearance of this race from Mexico after so large an importation of slaves as that which took place in the last century is the incongeniality of the climate of Mexico, particularly of the table-lands, to the negro constitution. At the breaking out of the Mexican revolution, almost the only negro slaves in the country were in the department of Vera Cruz. The sugar-planters of the hot country of the interior, finding it impossible to carry on their estates by the use of negro slaves, attempted to reduce the mortality among their working people by raising up a race of those disgusting-looking beings called Zambos, a cross of negroes and Indians; but it was attended with the usual ill success that has followed every attempt to cross or intermingle different and distinct races of men, animals, or even plants.

The advantages arising from transplanting the human race, as well as vegetables and plants, are manifestly great. But transplanting should never be confounded with intermixing races, whether they be human, or of the lower animals, or of plants. When God, in his infinite wisdom, saw fit to choose out a family that he destined to continue for thousands of years, He transplanted it into a new soil and climate, and subjected it to divers migrations. First it went down into Egypt, and then, "with a high hand and an outstretched arm," He brought it up out of Egypt, and after a sojourn of forty years in the wilderness, He re-established it in the land of Canaan. This is the origin of the most perfectly developed race of the present time. Whether in the tropics or in the most northern latitudes, the Jew is the same intellectual and physical man, and carries about with him the indelible marks of a descendant of those patriarchs who were commanded not to intermarry with the people among whom they dwelt. The Jew may wander and sojourn in strange lands, but he cherishes with national pride the blood of Abraham, which he insists still flows in his veins, and he is most careful, of all things, to transmit it pure to his children. Though Canaan abounded with fragments of nationalities, his boast is that his blood is not intermixed with any of them. To the history of the Jews we might add the experience of the Franciscan missionaries of California, that for a healthy offspring a man must marry among his own clan.

The constant complaints we hear of the deterioration of imported animals of choice breeds is the result of a disregard of this law of propagation. The importations of Merino sheep, and afterward of the Saxon, proved a failure chiefly from this cause. Those engaged in the importation of English cattle begin already to make the same complaint, which they would not have done had

they taken the precaution to import their foreign stock in families. The Mulatto is an apparent, not a real exception to the rule. He is superior to the Negro, often superior to his white father; but it is a superiority for a generation only, and carries with it the seeds of its own dissolution. The mule is superior to the donkey, but lasts only for a generation. The Oregon ox, a cross between the Spanish and American breeds, is superior to either of the pure breeds. But it is the concentration in one animal of what might be the material of divers generations.

I once asked a Dutchess county farmer the cause of the great superiority of his crops of wheat over those of his neighbors, and his reply was that he always brought his seed from a distance, changed it often, and took good care not to let it intermix with the wheat of that region. The same, or, rather, greater results have attended the transportation of American seeds and plants to California, where a new soil and a new climate has produced upon all the staples of agriculture such an improvement as to astonish men who have made this branch of industry a study. It is the result of the migration of plants where there are no plants of the same character to intermix, and so deteriorate the race by crossing the breed. In trees the same law holds unchangeably. We produce fine fruit by inoculation and by grafting; but experience has taught us never to inoculate upon a grafted stem, but always upon a natural branch. As the Conquistadors selected the best-looking Indian women for the mothers of the Meztizos, so the fruit-raiser selects the best natural stems to inoculate with his artificial varieties of fruit. In this way we get better fruit by exhausting the root, and a whole race of plants are sometimes worn out by mixture from too close a proximity of the different families of the same genus. In

the laws which Moses gave to the children of Israel, we find a provision against the evils of intermixtures in the precept: "Thy cattle shall not gender with diverse kind." "Thou shalt not sow thy field with divers seeds." In these precepts God has taken care to guard the wholesome generation of plants as well as of animals.

The successful intermingling of the Protestant Anglo-Saxon immigration with our own people in the second and third generations is not an exception to the law of generation, as both are but branches of the same stock, and are successfully planted together. Nor is the mortality which follows the Catholic immigration an exception to the beneficial law of migration, for habits of intemperance account for the short lives of these immigrants; and though their offspring is abundant, yet it is all tainted with an inheritance of disease, and too many of the children suffer the ruinous consequences of having drawn "still slops" from a mother's breast in infancy. For physically, and in the chain of generation, most truly are the sins of the fathers visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation.

Our collection of material for an argument will be complete when I have added that the trees most prolific of artificial fruit die the earliest, and suffer most from running sores; that the vines cultivated artificially to produce the choicest wines suffer most from the mildew, and the potatoes of the most artificial varieties are the ones that have suffered most from the rot. When the cholera first visited Mexico, its passage through the country was like the ravages of the Angel of Death among the Meztizos and the fragments of decaying races. And this progress toward depopulation can not be stayed by the infusion of a vigorous stock. The law of sexuality in plants leads to the intermarriage of the vigorous with the decaying and the intermixture of blossoms; nor can

human plants long vegetate together without intermarriages, which ingraft the vigorous constitutions with the virus of the old and decaying.

If, then, I have correctly enunciated the law of migration of men, animals, and plants, and if the law of intermixture of distinct races, or distinct species of the race, has been truly stated, the important argument to be drawn from it, which interests all Americans inquiring into the future of Mexico, is, that the present incongruous fragments of population which the internal disorders of Spain have set loose in Mexico can never be transformed into a homogeneous nationality, nor can sufficiently permanent elements of strength be found in this political chaos to constitute a permanent government. The degraded condition to which labor is reduced forbids the idea of an immigration of foreign laborers, while the miserable scale of wages—a quarter of a dollar a day upon the estates, payable out of the plantation store, or three shillings in the towns—holds out no inducement for poor men of a healthy race to abandon their own country and migrate to Mexico in sufficient numbers to form a substratum of society which ultimately might rise into a nationality.

A still more important question is disposed of by the facts stated in this chapter, viz., that there is no possibility of the present inhabitants of Mexico ever successfully driving back the Apaches and reconquering the northern provinces. Her title to the wild regions of the north, which rests on discovery and colonization, is lost by her utter inability to subdue the Indians and to colonize, after a probation of three hundred years. At this day the whole of the northern provinces lie, like waifs, open to any civilized people to take possession who require an additional territory. But nothing is so absurd as the American process of acquisition by treaty of ter-

ritories which already are, or soon will be, covered all over by immense land-claims, in districts subjugated by the Indians, instead of acknowledging the title of the Apaches to the lands they have conquered from Mexico, and long held in possession, and purchasing of those who are the real sovereigns of Northern Mexico.



MEXICAN PRIESTS TRAVELING.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Church of Mexico.—Its present Condition and Power.—The Number of the "Religios."—The Wealth of the Church.—The Money-power of the Church.—The Power of Assassination.—Educating the People robs the Priest.—Making and adoring Images.—The Progress downward.

The Catholic Church of Mexico is a peculiar institution. Its historical antecedents have been considered in previous chapters in connection with other subjects. Men no longer whisper their unbelief with trembling, nor have they any longer to dread inquisitorial fires if they refuse to pay tithes to the bishop, or if they neglect to bestow rich gifts upon the priests. Still the Church survives the losses of this important engine of piety, and continues unmodified by passing events. In the midst of revolutions it stands unchanged, a relic of the last century. It stands like a great showman's wagon from which the horses have been detached, and children, great and small, are collected around to look at its images. Unfortunately, there is an abundance of full-grown children in a country where, for centuries, a combination of spiritual and temporal despotisms have dwarfed the intellects of men down to the standard of a toy-shop religion, which had long rejoiced in crushing the human intellect, while it disdained to enlighten the humblest understanding.

Mexico is the only Catholic country in which the Church has remained unchanged during all the revolutions of the last half century. The French infidel armies, and the wars and revolutions that followed the

French invasions, overturned the Church of Spain and Italy, so that the Church organization that now exists in those peninsulas is a new creation. Not so in Mexico. Its revolution was for the purpose of saving the privileges of the Church from the too sweeping reforms of the Cortes of Spain. And there it now stands, with all the properties and annuities which it enjoyed in the time of the idiot kings. The Inquisition no longer enforces with fire the censures of the Church, and men are no longer compelled by legal process to pay tithes. But for these losses the Church has received a heavy compensation. The priests and inquisitors who ruled the childish court of Spain would allow no independence to the Mexican Church, but supplied, by royal appointment, all the candidates for vacant bishoprics and chapters, while the Vice-king was allowed to fill the inferior offices of the Church.

By the partial separation of Church and state which took place in 1833, the Church of Mexico became independent of the state. The chapters acquired the right of electing their own bishops; the bishops, by virtue of their spiritual authority, appointing the priests and exercising control over all Church property as *quasi* corporations-sole, at least over all property not vested in religious communities, if practically there could be said to be any real exception. What that newly-acquired power of the Mexican bishops amounts to, we in the United States, from our own experience of the same authority, can judge.

That the reader may know how extensive is this money-power of the bishops, I subjoin an extract from a statistical chart* published by Señor *Lerdo de Tejado*,

* *Grando Sinoptico de la Republica Mejicana en* 1850. *Por Miguel M. Lerdo y Tejado;* approved by the Mexican Society of Geography and Statistics.

First Official de Ministerio de Fomento, the following synopsis of the clergy and their incomes:

"There is one archbishop, the Archbishop of Mexico, and eleven bishops, and one to be created at Vera Cruz. There are 184 prebends and 1229 parishes. The total number of ecclesiastics is 3223.* There are 146 convents of monks and 59 convents of nuns, and 8 colleges for propagating the faith. The convents of monks are inhabited by 1139 persons, and there are 1541 nuns in convents, and with them 740 young girls and 870 servants. There are 238 persons in the colleges for propagating the faith." This is less than half the number of the *religios* under the vice-kings, while the riches of the Church have immensely increased, as we shall presently see.

I translate from the same author, in a note, statistics upon the much-agitated question of the wealth of the Church of Mexico,† from which it will be seen that the

* This number 3223 includes all of the 1139 monks, except the lay brothers. The two classes of priests, those who are not monks and those who are monks, are distinguished in Catholic countries as seculars and regulars (*clerigos* and *religios*). Humboldt says the Mexican clergy are composed of 10,000 individuals (*Essai Politique*, vol. i. p. 172), and, including the nuns, and lay brothers and sisters, he puts the sum total of the religious at 14,000. But in a note he gives the numbers in five of the principal departments out of twelve, which foot up at only 5405 for the clergy of both orders.

† "The general revenue destined for the maintenance of the clergy and of religious services in the republic may be divided into four classes: first, that which appertains to the bishops and to the canons, who form the chapter of the Cathedral; second, those revenues which appertain to particular ecclesiastics and chaplaincies; third, those of curates and vicars; fourth, those of divers communities of *religios*, of both sexes.

"The first class is principally of tithes and first-fruits, the product of which was very considerable in times past, when they included a tenth part of all the first fruits which grew upon the soil of the republic, and the firstlings of the cattle. But lately this revenue has much fallen off, since by the law of the 17th of October, 1833, it is no longer obligatory upon the cultivators to pay this contribution. Nevertheless, there still are many persons who, for conscientious reasons, or for other cause, continue to pay this tax, so that it produces a very consider-

total amount consumed in the maintenance of these 3223 persons, is annually $20,000,000, besides the very large

able sum. This part of the clergy also receive considerable sums which have been left by devout persons for the performance of certain annual ceremonies called *anniversaries.*

"The collegiate church of our Lady of Guadalupe has, in addition to a monthly lottery, which operates upon a capital of $13,000, certain properties and other capitals of which the government takes no account.

"Particular ecclesiastics and chaplains are supported on a capital generally of $3000, established by certain pious persons for that object, besides the alms of the faithful, which are given for a certain number of masses to be applied to objects of their devotion.

"The support of curates consists of parochial rights, viz., fees for baptisms, marriages, funerals, responses, and religious celebrations (*funcions*) which, in their respective churches, they command the faithful to make; and, finally, by the profits which they derive from the sale of *novenas*, medals, scapularies, ribbons (*madedas*), wax, and other objects which the parishioners employ.

"The income of convents of monks, besides the alms which they receive for masses, *funcions*, and funerals, which they celebrate in the convent churches, consists of the rents of great properties which they have accumulated in the course of ages.

"The convents of nuns are in like manner supported by the income of great estates, with the exception of two or three convents which possess no property, and whose inmates live on charity.

"Besides the incomes named, which pertain to the *personnel* of the clergy, there are, in the cathedrals and other parochial [churches], revenues which arise from some properties and foundations created for attending to certain dues called "*fabrica*," which consist of all those objects necessary for the services of this worship (*culta*).

"From the want of publicity which is generally observed in the management of the properties and *rents* [incomes] of the clergy, it is impossible to fix exactly the value of one or the other; but they can be calculated approximately by taking for the basis those data which are within the reach of the public, which are the total value of the production of the annual return (*movimiento*) of the population for births, marriages, deaths, and, finally, the devout practices which are still customary among the greater part of the population. Observing carefully these data, I assume, without the fear of committing a great error, that the total amount which the clergy to-day realize in the whole extent of the republic, for *rents*, proceeds of tithes, parochial rights, alms, religious ceremonies (*funcions*), and for the sale of divers objects of devotion, is between eight and ten millions of dollars.

"Some writers have estimated the properties belonging to the clergy at one half of the productive wealth of the nation; others at one third part; but I can not give much credit to such writers, as they are only calculations that rest on no certain data. I am sure that the total

sums expended in the repairs and ornaments of an enormous number of churches, and in gifts at the shrines of the different images, which can not be appropriated to the maintenance of the clergy. This sum of $20,000,000, if fairly divided among them, would yield an abundant support, though not an extravagant living; but, unfortunately, the greatest portion of this immense sum is absorbed by the bishops, while the priests of the villages contrive to exist by the contributions they wring out of the *peons*. At the time of the census, 1793, the twelve bishops had $539,000* appropriated to their support; but now their revenues are so mixed up with the revenues of the Church, that it is impossible to say how much these twelve successors of the apostles appropriate to their own support.

In place of the Inquisition which the reformed Spanish government took away from the Church of Mexico,

amount of the property of the clergy, for chaplaincies, foundations, and other pious uses, together with rustic and city properties, which belong to the divers religious corporations, amount to an enormous sum, notwithstanding the falling off that is said to have taken place from the amounts of former years.

"All property in the district of Mexico [federal district] is estimated at $50,000,000, the half of which pertains to the clergy. Uniting the product of this property to the tithes, parochial rights, etc., I am well assured that the total of the income of the clergy amounts to from eighteen to twenty millions of dollars."

* The Archbishop of Mexico	$130,000
Bishop of Pueblo	110,000
" Valladolid	110,000
" Guadalajara	90,000
" Durango	35,000
" Monterey	30,000
" Yucatan	20,000
" Oajaca	18,000
" Sonora	6,000
Total individual income of twelve bishops	$539,000

—*Essai Politique*, vol. i. p. 173.

The reason why the Bishop of Sonora was limited to $6000 was that his diocese was so poor that he had that salary paid out of the king's revenue.

the Church now wields the power of wealth, almost fabulous in amount, which is practically in the hands of a close corporation-sole. The influence of the Archbishop, as the substantial owner of half the property in the city of Mexico, gives him a power over his tenants unknown under our system of laws. Besides this, a large portion of the Church property is in money, and the Archbishop is the great loan and trust company of Mexico. Nor is this power by any means an insignificant one. A bankrupt government is overawed by it. Men of intellect are crushed into silence; and no opposition can successfully stand against the influence of this Church lord, who carries in his hands the treasures of heaven, and in his money-bags the material that moves the world. To understand the full force of his power of money, it must be borne in mind that Mexico is a country proverbial for recklessness in all conditions of life; for extravagant living and extravagant equipages; a country where a man's position in society is determined by the state he maintains; a country, the basis of whose wealth is the mines of precious metal; where princely fortunes are quickly acquired and suddenly lost, and where hired labor has hardly a cash value. In such a country, the power and influence of money has a meaning beyond any idea that we can form. Look at a prominent man making an ostentatious display of his devotion: his example is of advantage to the Church, and the Church may be of advantage to him, for it has an abundance of money at 6 per cent. per annum, while the outside money-lenders charge him 2 per cent. per month. The Church, too, may have a mortgage upon his house over-due; and woe betide him if he should undertake a crusade against the Church. This is a string that the Church can pull upon which is strong enough to overawe government itself.

This money-power of the Church yet lacks complete-

ness and concentration to make it even a tolerable substitute for the power lost by the abolition of the Inquisition, as this wealth is distributed among 12 independent bishops. But, having succeeded in establishing the temporal power of her bishops in Mexico more firmly than in the United States, the Papal court made another step in advance. In 1852, Mexico was electrified with delight at the condescension of the Holy Father in sending a *nuncio* to that city. For two full years this representative of the Holy See was *fêted* and toasted on all hands, as little less than the Pope himself, whom he represented. But last year all these happy feelings were dashed with gall and wormwood by an announcement that as the bishops controlled all this immense property by virtue of their spiritual authority, there was a resulting trust in his favor, or at least in favor of the Pope, whom he represented with full powers. It was Pandora's box opened in the midst of "a happy family." There was no disputing the nuncio's law; but to render to him an account of their receipts and disbursements, or to deliver over the bonds and mortgages to this agent of the Pope, was most unpleasant. The old Archbishop keeps fast hold of the money-bags, which, so far, the keys of Saint Peter have been unable to unlock. The battle waxes loud and fierce between the parties and their partisans, and Santa Anna stands looking on, dreaming of the happy time when, through the internal dissensions of the Church, these accumulations of 300 years of robbery and false pretenses will fall into the public treasury, and the people as well as the government will obtain their enfranchisement.

The money-power of the Church has proved sufficiently strong to save it from the hungry maw of a famishing government, and to stand unaffected by the revolutions that surround it; and now and then, when too bitterly

assailed by some political reformer, it finds relief in the assassination of the assailant, as in the case of the eloquent member of the last Congress, who, after a violent philippic against the corruptions of the priests, was found murdered in his chamber. And, as in case of the inquisitorial assassinations, the crime was proved to have been connected with a robbery. The power to overawe courts of justice, proverbially corrupt, and the facilities with which assassinations are procured, are now the most dreaded weapons of the Church, and may account for the nominal conformity of the intelligent classes.

The unbelievers in Mexico, though considerable in numbers, are not organized with a positive creed. Theirs is only a negative existence—unbelief; and they are generally found conforming outwardly, as a more convenient and prudent course than running a tilt with the well-organized forces of the Church.

There is nothing peculiar in the spiritual powers of the Church of Mexico, as these powers are common to all Catholic countries, and vary only with the ignorance and brutality of the people; the more degraded the people, the greater is the power of the priest and bishop. The intelligent Catholic, educated among Protestants, looks upon his priest as a religious instructor, and interprets the *ego te absolvo* as rather a matter of form, meaning little more than that he will intercede for him. He has caught and is applying a Protestant idea unwittingly. But with the gross multitude who constitute the mass of the Spanish-American population, the priest is the God of the people; his giving or withholding absolution is a matter of life or death; and, however corrupt and debauched he may be, he still holds jurisdiction over the pains of hell and the bliss of heaven. For a reasonable consideration in money, he will shut up the one and open the other. The offering in the mass of the bloodless sacri-

fice of Jesus Christ, as it is called, is not sufficient for the Catholic in a Protestant country, but the priest must also preach a sermon every Sabbath, like a Protestant minister, though he still holds to the efficacy of the mass in conferring blessings on the living and the believing dead. The preaching of the priest is a rare thing in an exclusively Catholic country. The mass is his livelihood, and if he be the head of a community, or a popular priest, he often makes a profit in taking in masses to say, and letting out the job at a discount. The whole matter may be summed up by saying that the more profoundly ignorant the people are, the more devotional do they become, so that the priest has always a pecuniary interest in the ignorance of the people, and if he makes any effort toward their enlightenment, it is an effort made directly against his own pecuniary interests and the income of his office.

The most ancient anti-Catholic, I might with propriety say, Protestant sect, whose form of synagogue worship is congregational, and who are republican at heart, though too often submitting to a despotism, are the Jews. Between these two, the Jew and the Catholic, there exists an unmitigated hostility. The Catholic reviles the Jew with a sin of which, most likely, his own ancestors were not guilty,* and the Jew curses the Nazarene for the idolatry of his worshipers. He will make no allowances for the nice distinction between adoration and worship, and insists that the making the likeness of any *thing* to be set up in a place of worship is idolatry, and that the image of the cross is as much an image as the image of Him who hung thereon. And in all this the

* Most of the Jews of our day are the descendants of the Babylonian Jews, who did not return to Jerusalem after the Captivity, but remained in the province of Babylon until they were driven out, some four hundred or more years after Christ; the Babylonian, not the Jerusalem Talmud, being most commonly in use among them.

Jew is right, if we are to obey the commandment of God. Yet the Jew forgets that a thousand years of trial were requisite to cure his ancestors of their proneness to idols. After their first mission, accomplished in the birth of Christ, God has preserved them a perpetual witness against paganism. But so subtle is this sin, that we find ourselves setting up sensuous representations, while we point the finger of scorn at the Catholic, who ascribes miraculous power to an image of the Virgin. And what is the difference, the Almighty himself being judge, between setting up a cross in a place of worship or ascribing miraculous power to an image, or, as is the fashion to say, some spirit acting through the image? Are they not different stages of the same disease, and each equally calculated to provoke the Almighty to jealousy.

Image worship has another curious aspect. It is a very tolerable thermometer by which to measure the downward progress of nations. Pagan Rome, in times of comparative purity, had her laws against idolatry; but as her higher classes advanced in refinement and sensuality, and the plebeians became debased and brutalized, the whole religious ideas of the nation degenerated into idolatry, associated with a despotic miracle-working priesthood, and soon followed by a political despotism. It is curious to witness how exactly it takes on the same form in different countries in traveling this downward road. The Buddhist of China, who has reached a thousand-fold lower level than the Catholic, has his unmarried priesthood, his monks, and nuns, and self-imposed penances, and tortures, and holy water, and a ritual in an unknown tongue (Sanscrit), so strikingly resembling the Catholic as to suggest the idea of a common origin, if such an idea were not impossible. Yet in the moral standard they seem to have reached the point of total depravity. Hence we might sum up the

cause that have produced the Mexican of the present day by enumerating the absence of the scriptural idea of family relation; the despotism exercised by the priesthood with the aid of an Inquisition, and the unnumbered toll-gates they have placed on the road to heaven; the effeminacy of the higher classes and debasement of the peasantry; the absorption of half the revenues of the country in superstitious and idolatrous purposes, and the uncleanly habits superinduced by mental and physical degradation for generations, so that the word *leper* is used to designate a poor man in the city where that loathsome disease has had its victims.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Causes that have diminished the Religios.—The Provincials and Superiors of Convents.—The perfect Organization.—The Monks.—San Franciscans.—Dominicans.—Carmelites.—The well-reputed Orders. —The Jesuits.—The Nuns.—How Novices are procured.—Contrasted with a Quaker Prison.—The poor deluded Nun.—A good old Quaker Woman not a Saint.—Protestantism felt in Mexico.

The monkish orders of Mexico have remained unchanged from the time of their first establishment. We have seen that they have fallen off immensely in numbers, but have increased immensely in efficiency, by the termination of those internal controversies between the Spanish-born and Creoles, and by enfranchisement from state control. Not only are they now all native-born, but the Meztizos seem to be the predominant race in the priesthood. The priesthood is not now so inviting an employment as it was before the suppression of the Inquisition. Miracles have ceased to be a profitable speculation, while the reverence once paid to the monks has been followed by ill-suppressed contempt. The employments once monopolized by the Spaniards being now thrown open to general competition, there is less willingness to submit to the despotism which ever reigns in religious houses than there was in the times of the vice-kings. Hard fare, cruel treatment, and public contempt have diminished the candidates for monastic orders, until the old proverb—"He that can not do better, let him turn monk"—is not unknown at Mexico. With the increase of liberty the number of nuns has diminished, as violence can no longer be used in getting a girl into a convent. For all these reasons the number of the *relig-*

ios has rapidly diminished, while the wealth and efficiency of the Church has increased.

Having spoken of the bishops, the lords spiritual of Mexico, and the controlling influence they exercise over a feeble government, we come next to the second class of spiritual masters of the country—the heads of orders, the provincials, and the heads of religious houses. These two classes of dignitaries are usually elected for their known severity of discipline, either by the procurement of the bishop, or through fanaticism of the monks or nuns, who, having voluntarily made themselves convicts and prisoners for life, now undertake to add to their self-afflicted mortification by choosing for their head a superior the most hateful of their number. The novice is taught that the greatest favor with Heaven is to be obtained by implicit obedience under most trying circumstances, and the more cruel the despotism they unmurmuringly submit to, the greater will be the accumulation of good works. But cursed to the lowest depths of Purgatory is that recluse who dares to murmur even in his inmost thoughts; and if he so far forgets his duty as to murmur aloud, then all the powers of the Church are brought to crush his insubordination.

We have thus followed spiritual despotism through its various stages, from the Pope to the bishops; from the bishops to the provincials of religious orders; and then down to superiors of a community of half a dozen monks or nuns, by whom immorality is pardonable, but who regard disobedience or insubordination in the slightest particular "like the sin of witchcraft and idolatry." Such is the perfect organization of the papacy in all its parts, which, acting as one great secret, political, social, and religious association, labors continually to concentrate the riches of the nations at Rome as a common centre.

There is a peculiar feature in the Catholic Church in

Mexico unknown in other Catholic countries: it is the preponderance of the regular clergy (monks) over the secular clergy. This is owing to Cortéz, who wrote to the Emperor Charles V. to send him regulars, for the conversion of the Indians, instead of seculars, assigning as a reason for this request "that the latter display extravagant luxury, leave great wealth to their natural children, and give great scandal to the newly-converted Indians." Hence more than one half of the Mexican clergy are monks, and wear the cowl; for at the time of the census of 1793, as we have seen, there were in the city of Mexico 1646 monks, besides lay brothers, against 550 secular priests, while in the fifteen convents for nuns there were 923 of these female monks.

The reader has already become quite familiar with the Franciscan fathers and their vows of poverty and self-mortification, and their skill at playing for gold ounces. They have pretty well maintained that reputation since the time of Friar Thomas Gage. But there are some honorable exceptions to this rule, though few and far between. We have already noticed how they were favored by Cortéz, and the result has been that they are the richest fraternity in the republic. These holy men of the Angelic Order of Saint Francis have lately discovered a new source of wealth in renting their large central court to a Frenchman, who occupies it with the best garden of plants in Mexico; and as the convent occupies nearly a whole square in the central part of the city, they have pierced the convent walls, and rented out shops upon the business streets, while the soldiers of Santa Anna occupy the vacant cloisters of the convent. In this "happy family," with all the immense wealth of the establishment, the *donados*, and those monks who are so poor as to have no friends, find but a miserable subsistence.

Of the Dominicans I have already spoken in connec-

tion with the Inquisition. In their yard is the flag-stone which was used by them in offering human sacrifice before the Revolution. There it is kept as a relic and symbol of the power once enjoyed by the Church. There is yet a lingering hope that there may be restored to these brethren the power of roasting alive human beings. In speaking of depravity of morals, it is hard to say which of the fraternities has reached the lowest level, though common consent concedes the palm to the Dominicans.

The name of the Carmelites carries us back to the time of the Crusades ; but they are better known in Mexico as the former proprietors of the *Desierto*, which Thomas Gage so touchingly describes. Their habitual practice of self-denial and mortification, in appearance, while rioting on the luxuries that devotees lavished upon them, has not been forgotten. These holy brothers had a hand in the Inquisition as well as the Dominicans. They were a set of scamps set to watch the purity of other men's lives, while they themselves lived a life of habitual profligacy. The ruins of their old convent, the *Desierto*, is still one of the most attractive spots about the city. As the traveler wanders among its ruined walls, he will find in the subterraneous cells ring-bolts fastened in the walls, where poor prisoners for their faith endured something more than self-mortification.

The monks of Santiago, San Augustin, and the Capuchins have all fine convents, and are rich; but the monks of Saint James are the most inveterate beggars.

The monks of San Fernando enjoy an enviable reputation compared with the spotted sheep I have just been considering. They are late comers, and have not learned all the ways of wickedness of the older orders. Next come the "Brethren of the Profession," of whom it is pleasant to speak, after saying so many hard things of their neighbors. They stand so high as men of charac-

ter and learning, that I am tempted to tell their story on hearsay, for want of better authority. They were once Jesuits, but when the royal *cebula* of Carlos III. came for their expulsion, these fathers had sustained so good a character for charity and usefulness that they were allowed to return, on condition of renouncing the name and peculiarities of that order. I am inclined to believe this strange story to be substantially true, for clearly they are of the Jesuits, and yet they are not Jesuits. The reputation which they enjoyed in 1767 they still retain, and not only command the respect of all classes of society in Mexico, but their chapel is the fashionable church of the city, where genteel people resort to say their prayers.

"The Brethren of the Holy Places of Jerusalem"—the Hieronomite monks, are not numerous, and are known in the markets as lenders of money, with the interest of which they support themselves and "the poor saints of Jerusalem;" that is, a portion of those lazy, greasy, fighting Latin monks at Jerusalem, that have been one of the causes of the present war in Europe.

"The Hospitalers of Saint John" (*Juanos*) are better known for their exploits in the time of the Crusaders than for any thing they have done in Mexico.

It would be a thrice-told tale to repeat the story of the Jesuits; the world knows that too well already. The details of their proceedings in Mexico till the time of their expulsion have been too often written by their enemies. Their great prosperity and their great wealth made them the envy of the other orders, as corrupt and depraved as themselves, but not so dangerous, because they had reached that point at which depravity ceases to contaminate. Dirty, greasy monks could not endure an order that wore the garb of gentlemen, and were in favor with the aristocracy, while they themselves were despised.

This envy was all-powerful with them, and led, for a time, to the laying aside of their own private bickerings, and uniting in the crusade against the common enemy, the Jesuits, and acting in harmony with the political power.

The Church has always made much of the nuns. It has ever been the custom of the priesthood to endeavor to throw a veil of romance over the very unromantic way of life followed by females who have shut themselves up for life in a place hardly equal to a second-class state-prison. Woman has an important place which God has assigned her in the world; but when she separates herself from the family circle, and elbows her way to the rostrum, where, with a semi-masculine attire, and with a voice not intended for oratory, she harangues a tittering crowd upon the rights of women to perform the duties of men; or goes to the opposite extreme, and shuts herself up within high stone walls to avoid the society of the other sex, she equally sins against her own nature, and not only brings misery upon herself, but inflicts upon society the evils of a pernicious example, and furnishes a theme for all kinds of scandal.

Proud families who have portionless daughters; relatives who desire to get rid of heirs to coveted estates; convents in want of funds and endowments,* or a pretty

* I have selected three cases of taking the veil, to which I have added captions, which lift the veil from this practice of consecrating young girls to superstitious uses. They are extracted from Madame Calderon's Life in Mexico.

Taking the Veil.

"I followed the guide back into the sacristy [of the convent], where the future nun was seated beside her grandmother, in the midst of her friends and relations, about thirty in all.

"She was arrayed in pale blue satin, with diamonds, pearls, and a crown of flowers. She was literally smothered in blonde and jewels; and her face was flushed, as well it might be, for she had passed the day in taking leave of her friends at a fête they had given her, and had then, according to custom, been paraded through the town in all her finery. And now her last hour was at hand. When I came in, she rose and

victim for the public entertainment on taking the veil; friends who have unmarriageable women on their hands;

embraced me with as much cordiality as if we had known each other for years. Beside her sat the Madrina, also in white satin and jewels; all the relations being likewise decked out in their finest array. The nun kept laughing every now and then in the most unnatural and hysterical manner, as I thought, apparently to impress us with the conviction of her perfect happiness; for it is a great point of honor among girls similarly situated to look as cheerful and gay as possible—the same feeling, though in a different degree, which induces the gallant highwayman to jest in the presence of the multitude when the hangman's cord is within an inch of his neck; the same which makes a gallant general, whose life is forfeited, command his men to fire on him; the same which makes the Hindoo widow mount the funeral pile without a tear in her eye or a sigh on her lips. If the robber were to be strangled in the corner of his dungeon—if the general were to be put to death privately in his own apartment—if the widow were to be burned quietly on her own hearth—if the nun were to be secretly smuggled in at the convent gate like a bale of contraband goods, we might hear another tale. This girl was very young, but by no means pretty; on the contrary, rather *disgraciée par la nature;* and perhaps a knowledge of her own want of attractions may have caused the world to have few charms for her.

"Suddenly the curtain was withdrawn, and the picturesque beauty of the scene within baffles all description. Beside the altar, which was in a blaze of light, was a perfect mass of crimson and gold drapery; the walls, the antique chairs, the table before which the priests sat, all hung with the same splendid material. The Bishop wore his superb mitre, and robes of crimson and gold, the attendant priests also glittering in crimson and gold embroidery.

"In contrast to these, five-and-twenty figures, entirely robed in black from head to foot, were ranged on each side of the room, prostrate, their faces touching the ground, and in their hands immense lighted tapers. On the foreground was spread a purple carpet bordered round with a garland of freshly-gathered flowers, roses, and carnations, and heliotrope, the only things that looked real and living in the whole scene; and in the middle of this knelt the novice, still arrayed in her blue satin, white lace veil and jewels, and also with a great lighted taper in her hand.

"The black nuns then rose and sang a hymn, every now and then falling on their faces and touching the floor with their foreheads. The whole looked like an incantation, or a scene in Robert le Diable. The novice was then raised from the ground and led to the feet of the Bishop, who examined her as to her vocation, and gave her his blessing, and once more the black curtain fell between us and them.

"In the *second act* she was lying prostrate on the floor, disrobed of her profane dress, and covered over with a black cloth, while the black figures kneeling around her chanted a hymn. She was now dead to

and romantic young misses, ambitious of playing the queen for a day at the cost of being a prisoner for life,

the world. The sunbeams had faded away as if they would not look upon the scene, and all the light was concentrated in one great mass upon the convent group.

"Again she was raised. All the blood had rushed into her face, and her attempt to smile was truly painful. She then knelt down before the Bishop, and received the benediction, with the sign of the cross, from a white hand with the pastoral ring. She then went round alone to embrace all the dark phantoms as they stood motionless, and as each dark shadow clasped her in its arms, it seemed like the dead welcoming a new arrival to the shades.

"But I forget the sermon, which was delivered by a fat priest, who elbowed his way with some difficulty through the crowd to the grating, panting and in a prodigious heat, and ensconced himself in a great arm-chair close beside us. He assured her that she 'had chosen the good part, which could not be taken away from her;' that she was now one of the elect, 'chosen from among the wickedness and dangers of the world'—(picked out like a plum from a pie). He mentioned with pity and contempt those who were 'yet struggling in the great Babylon,' and compared their miserable fate with hers, the Bride of Christ, who, after suffering a few privations here during a short term of years, should be received at once into a kingdom of glory. The whole discourse was well calculated to rally her fainting spirits, if fainting they were, and to inspire us with a great disgust for ourselves.

"When the sermon was concluded the music again struck up; the heroine of the day came forward, and stood before the grating to take her last look of this wicked world. Down fell the black curtain. Up rose the relations, and I accompanied them into the sacristy. Here they coolly lighted their cigars, and very philosophically discoursed upon the exceeding good fortune of the new-made nun, and on her evident delight and satisfaction with her own situation. As we did not follow her behind the scenes, I could not give my opinion on this point. Shortly after, one of the gentlemen civilly led me to my carriage, and *so it was.*"

A Victim for her Musical Powers.

"In the convent of the Incarnation I saw another girl sacrificed in a similar manner. She was received there without a dowry, on account of the exceeding fineness of her voice. She little thought what a fatal gift it would prove to her. The most cruel part of all was that, wishing to display her fine voice to the public, they made her sing a hymn alone, on her knees, her arms extended in the form of a cross, before all the immense crowd: "Ancilla Christi sum," "The bride of Christ I am." She was a good-looking girl, fat and comely, who would probably have led a comfortable life in the world, for which she seemed well fitted; most likely without one touch of romance or enthusiasm in

have all contributed to populate the fifteen nunneries of the city of Mexico. In the flourishing times of the In-

her composition; but, having the unfortunate honor of being niece to two *chanoines*, she was thus honorably provided for without expense in her nineteenth year. As might be expected, her voice faltered, and instead of singing, she seemed inclined to cry out. Each note came slowly, heavily, tremblingly; and at last she nearly fell forward exhausted, when two of the sisters caught and supported her."

A Victim of her Confessor.

"She was in purple velvet, with diamonds and pearls, and a crown of flowers; the corsage of her gown was entirely covered with little bows of ribbon of divers colors, which her friends had given her, each adding one, like stones thrown on a cairn in memory of the departed. She had also short sleeves and white satin shoes.

"Being very handsome, with fine black eyes, good teeth, and fresh color, and, above all, with the beauty of youth, for she is but eighteen, she was not disfigured by even this overloaded dress. Her mother, on the contrary, who was to act the part of Madrina, who wore a dress facsimile, and who was pale and sad, her eyes almost extinguished with weeping, looked like a picture of Misery in a ball-dress. In the adjoining room long tables were laid out, on which servants were placing refreshments for the fête about to be given on this joyous occasion. I felt somewhat shocked, and inclined to say with Paul Pry, 'Hope I don't intrude.'

"——, however, was furious at the whole affair, which he said was entirely against the mother's consent, though that of the father had been obtained; and pointed out to me the confessor whose influence had brought it about. The girl herself was now very pale, but evidently resolved to conceal her agitation, and the mother seemed as if she could shed no more tears—quite exhausted with weeping. As the hour for the ceremony drew near, the whole party became more grave and sad, all but the priests, who were smiling and talking together in groups. The girl was not still a moment. She kept walking hastily through the house, taking leave of the servants, and naming, probably, her last wishes about every thing. She was followed by her younger sisters, all in tears.

"But it struck six, and the priests intimated that it was time to move. She and her mother went down stairs alone, and entered the carriage which was to drive them through all the principal streets, to show the nun to the public, according to custom, and to let them take their last look, they of her and she of them. As they got in, we all crowded to the balconies to see her take leave of her house, her aunts saying, 'Yes, child, *despídete de tu casa*, take leave of your house, for you will never see it again!' Then came sobs from the sisters; and many of the gentlemen, ashamed of their emotion, hastily quitted the room. I hope, for the sake of humanity, I did not rightly interpret the look of con-

quisition, this business of inveigling choice victims into convents was more profitable, for then murmuring could

strained anguish which the poor girl threw from the window of the carriage at the home of her childhood.

"At stated periods, indeed, the mother may hear her daughter's voice speaking to her as from the depths of the tomb, but she may never fold her in her arms, never more share in her joys or in her sorrows, or nurse her in sickness; and when her own last hour arrives, though but a few streets divide them, she may not give her dying blessing to the child who has been for so many years the pride of her eyes and heart.

"They gave me an excellent place, quite close to the grating, beside the Countess de S——o; that is to say, a place to kneel on. A great bustle and much preparation seemed to be going on within the convent, and veiled figures were flitting about, whispering, arranging, &c. Sometimes a skinny old dame would come close to the grating, and, lifting up her veil, bestow upon the pensive public a generous view of a very haughty and very wrinkled visage of some seventy years standing, and beckon into the church for the major-domo of the convent (an excellent and profitable situation, by the way), or for padre this or that. Some of the holy ladies recognized and spoke to me through the grating.

"But, at the discharge of fireworks outside the church, the curtain was dropped, for this was the signal that the nun and her mother had arrived. An opening was made in the crowd as they passed into the church, and the girl, kneeling down, was questioned by the bishop, but I could not make out the dialogue, which was carried on in a low voice. She then passed into the convent by a side door, and her mother, quite exhausted and nearly in hysterics, was supported through the crowd to a place beside us, in front of the grating. The music struck up; the curtain was again drawn aside. The scene was as striking here as in the convent of the Santa Teresa, but not so lugubrious. The nuns, all ranged around, and carrying lighted tapers in their hands, were dressed in mantles of bright blue, with a gold plate on the left shoulder. Their faces, however, were covered with deep black veils. The girl, kneeling in front, and also bearing a heavy lighted taper, looked beautiful, with her dark hair and rich dress, and the long black lashes resting on her glowing face. The churchmen near the illuminated and magnificently-decked altar formed, as usual, a brilliant background to the picture. The ceremony was the same as on the former occasion, but there was no sermon.

"The most terrible thing to witness was the last, straining, anxious look which the mother gave her daughter through the grating. She had seen her child pressed to the arms of strangers and welcomed to her new home. She was no longer hers. All the sweet ties of nature had been rudely severed, and she had been forced to consign her, in the very bloom of youth and beauty, at the very age in which she most required a mother's care, and when she had but just fulfilled the promise of her childhood, to a living tomb. Still, as long as the curtain had

be crushed into silence, and parents dreaded to oppose the wretched pimps of superstition who came to inveigle their daughters into convents.

The Quaker prison of Philadelphia is a paradise compared with such a place as this. If the reader has ever placed his eye at the keeper's eye-hole in that prison, he must have seen in many a cell a cheerful face, and the appearance of as much comfort as is compatible with an imprisoned condition; for ministering angels have been there—mothers in Israel, who have torn themselves from their domestic duties for a little time to minister consolation to the very criminals in prison; and, now that the prison-door has separated the poor wretch forever from society, whose laws have been outraged, she, by her kindness and teaching, has led the convict to look to Heaven with a hope of forgiveness, and daily to pray for those he has injured, while he reads in the holy book which she

not fallen, she could gaze upon her as upon one on whom, though dead, the coffin-lid is not yet closed.

"But while the new-made nun was in a blaze of light and distinct on the foreground, so that we could mark each varying expression of her face, the crowd in the church, and the comparative faintness of the light, probably made it difficult for her to distinguish her mother; for, knowing that the end was at hand, she looked anxiously and hurriedly into the church, without seeming able to fix her eyes on any particular object, while her mother seemed as if her eyes were glazed, so intensely were they fixed upon her daughter.

"Suddenly, and without any preparation, down fell the black curtain like a pall, and the sobs and tears of the family broke forth. One beautiful little child was carried out almost in fits. Water was brought to the poor mother; and at last, making our way with difficulty through the dense crowd, we got into the sacristy. 'I declare,' said the Countess —— to me, wiping her eyes, 'it is worse than a marriage!' I expressed my horror at the sacrifice of a girl so young that she could not possibly have known her own mind. Almost all the ladies agreed with me, especially all who had daughters, but many of the old gentlemen were of a different opinion. The young men were decidedly of my way of thinking, but many young girls who were conversing together seemed rather to envy their friend, who had looked so pretty and graceful, and 'so happy,' and whose dress 'suited her so well,' and to have no objection to 'go and do likewise.'"

gave him, that a repenting thief accompanied the Son of God to Paradise.

Let us turn from such an unpoetical scene as this, which that cheerful prison presents, to the convent of Santa Teresa, the most celebrated of all the ten or fifteen nunneries now in operation about the city of Mexico. In a cold, damp, comfortless cell, kneeling upon the pavement, we may see a delicate woman mechanically repeating her daily-imposed penance of Latin prayers, before the image of a favorite saint and a basin of holy water. This self-regulating, automaton praying machine, as she counts off the number of allotted prayers by the number of beads upon her rosary, beats into her bosom the sharp edge of an iron cross that rests within her shirt of sacking-cloth, until, nature and her task exhausted, she throws herself down upon a wooden bed, so ingeniously arranged as to make sleep intolerable.* This poor victim of self-

* "The Santa Teresa, however, has few ornaments. It is not nearly so large as the *Encarnacion*, and admits but twenty-one nuns. At present there are, besides these, but three novices. Its very atmosphere seems holy, and its scrupulous and excessive cleanness makes all profane dwellings seem dirty by comparison. We were accompanied by a bishop, Señor Madrid, the same who assisted at the archbishop's consecration—a good-looking man, young and tall, and very splendidly dressed. His robes were of purple satin, covered with fine point-lace, with a large cross of diamonds and amethysts. He also wore a cloak of very fine purple cloth, lined with crimson velvet, crimson stockings, and an immense amethyst ring.

"When he came in we found that the nuns had permission to put up their veils, rarely allowed in this order in the presence of strangers. They have a small garden and fountain, plenty of flowers, and some fruit; but all is on a smaller scale, and sadder than in the convent of the Incarnation. The refectory is a large room, with a long, narrow table running all round it—a plain deal table, with wooden benches; before the place of each nun, an earthen bowl, an earthen cup with an apple in it, a wooden plate, and a wooden spoon; at the top of the table a grinning skull, to remind them that even these indulgences they shall not long enjoy.

"In one corner of the room is a reading-desk, a sort of elevated pulpit, where one reads aloud from some holy book while the others discuss their simple fare. They showed us a crown of thorns, which, on

inflicted daily torture, half crazed from insufficient food, and sleep, and clothing, has endured all this misery to·

certain days, is worn by one of their number by way of penance. It is made of iron, so that the nails, entering inward, run into the head, and make it bleed. While she wears this on her head, a sort of wooden bit is put into her mouth, and she lies prostrate on her face till dinner is ended; and while in this condition her food is given her, of which she eats as much as she can, which probably is none.

"We visited the different cells, and were horror-struck at the self-inflicted tortures. Each bed consists of a wooden plank raised in the middle, and, on days of penitence, crossed by wooden bars. The pillow is wooden, with a cross lying on it, which they hold in their hands when they lie down. The nun lies on this penitential couch, embracing the cross, and her feet hanging out, as the bed is made too short for her, upon principle. Round her waist she occasionally wears a band with iron points turning inward; on her breast a cross with nails, of which the points enter the flesh, of the truth of which I had melancholy ocular demonstration. Then, after having scourged herself with a whip covered with iron nails, she lies down for a few hours on the wooden bars, and rises at four o'clock. All these instruments of discipline, which each nun keeps in a little box beside her bed, look as if their fitting place would be in the dungeons of the Inquisition. They made me try their *bed and board*, which I told them would give me a very decided taste for early rising.

"Yet they all seem as cheerful as possible, though it must be confessed that many of them look pale and unhealthy. It is said that, when they are strong enough to stand this mode of life, they live very long; but it frequently happens that girls who come into this convent are obliged to leave it from sickness long before the expiration of their novitiate. I met with the girl whom I had seen take the veil, and can not say that she looked either well or cheerful, though she assured me that 'of course, in doing the will of God,' she was both. There was not much beauty among them generally, though one or two had remains of great loveliness. My friend, the Madre A——, is handsomer on a closer view than I had supposed her, and seems an especial favorite with old and young. But there was one whose face must have been strikingly beautiful. She was as pale as marble, and, though still young, seemed in very delicate health; but her eyes and eyebrows were as black as jet; the eyes so large and soft, the eyebrows two penciled arches, and her smiles so resigned and sweet, would have made her the loveliest model imaginable for a Madonna.

"Again, as in the Incarnation, they had taken the trouble to prepare an elegant supper for us. The bishop took his place in an antique velvet chair; the Señora —— and I were placed on each side of him. The room was very well lighted, and there was as great a profusion of custards, jellies, and ices as if we had been supping at the most profane *café*. The nuns did not sit down, but walked about, pressing us to eat,

accumulate a stock of good works for the use of less meritorious sinners, besides the amount necessary to carry herself to heaven; for penance, and not repentance, is this poor pagan's password for salvation.

The old Quakeress is not a fashionable saint, for she never dreamed of this huxter-business in spiritual affairs. Out of the overflowing goodness of her heart, she had tried to lighten the miseries of life in her own humble and quiet way, and found her happiness in seeing all about her made comfortable. The money that others expended in buying masses for the repose of their own souls and those of their relatives after death, she expended in ministering to soul and body in this world, leaving to God above the affairs of departed spirits, to deal with them according to His mercy. She never presumed to add to the torments of this life, or undertook to lighten the torments of the departed. Her duties lay all in this world, and when her labors were ended, she quietly lay

the bishop now and then giving them cakes, with permission to eat them, which they received laughing.

"After supper a small harp was brought in, which had been sent for by the bishop's permission. It was terribly out of tune, with half the strings broken; but we were determined to grudge no trouble in putting it in order, and giving these poor recluses what they considered so great a gratification. We got it into some sort of condition at last, and when they heard it played, they were vehement in their expressions of delight. The Señora ——, who has a charming voice, afterward sang to them, the bishop being very indulgent, and permitting us to select whatever songs we chose, so that, when rather a profane canticle, "The Virgin of the Pillar" (La Virgin del Pilar), was sung, he very kindly turned a deaf ear to it, and seemed busily engaged in conversation with an old madre till it was all over.

"In these robes they are buried; and one would think that if any human being can ever leave this world without a feeling of regret, it must be a nun of the Santa Teresa, when, her privations in this world ended, she lays down her blameless life, and joins the pious sisterhood who have gone before her; dying where she has lived, surrounded by her companions, her last hours soothed by their prayers and tears, sure of their vigils for the repose of her soul, and, above all, sure that neither pleasure nor vanity will ever obliterate her remembrance from their hearts."—*Life in Mexico*, vol. ii. p. 9.

down in death, leaving her future condition to God. She never would pierce her bosom with an iron cross, though it had often been pierced by the trials of life. She has seen enough of real poverty and mortification, but never dreamed of such a thing as poverty and mortification self-imposed, by wearing upon her flesh a garment of sacking-cloth, or the ingenious invention of a bed so contrived as to deprive herself of wholesome sleep. Images and holy water occupy no place in her creed, though soap and water are almost too prominent. She did her good deeds from a sense of duty which she owed to her kind, and from the pleasure that it gave her to relieve misery while discharging the ordinary duties of life, and never dreamed of the sweet odor her good works left behind her—an odor which followed her to heaven—an odor more acceptable to the Almighty than all the endowments she might have left to pay for masses for the repose of her soul.

There is so much that is monotonous in talking over the details of affairs of the different orders of these female monks, from the Sisters of Guadalupe to the Sisterhood of Mercy, that it is as well to consider them as one, as divers households of single women, who, to win extraordinary favor of God, had separated themselves from their families, and devoted their lives, some to repeating prayers and acts of self-mortification, some to attending at the hospitals on the sick or the blind, the idiotic, the deformed, the deaf and the dumb, others to educating young ladies according to their peculiar notions of education, others again consecrating themselves to pauperism, and living upon charity; and when the daily supply of alms has failed, these self-made poor sisters collect together, and there wait and pray, and ring their bell, until some benevolent individual shall chance to hear the well-known signal, and come and relieve them.

Such is the system of religion of all countries which bear the Christian name, but where freedom does not exist, and where liberty can not thrive. There is a trifling difference in its phases as exhibited in the Greek and the Latin Churches, but the difference is too slight for us outsiders to notice. In Mexico it exists in its most unadulterated state, less contaminated than elsewhere with Protestantism or other foreign substances.

The old farce of self-castigation is here still enacted, as it has been for three hundred years, but in the dark, *of course*; and blood, or some substitute for it, is heard to fall upon the floor by the few selected witnesses;* but

* "All Mexicans at present, men and women, are engaged in what are called the *desagravios*, a public penance performed at this season in the churches during thirty-five days. The women attend church in the morning, no men being permitted to enter, and the men in the evening, when women are not admitted. Both rules are occasionally broken. The penitence of the men is most severe, their sins being no doubt proportionably greater than those of the women; though it is one of the few countries where they suffer for this, or seem to act upon the principle, that 'if all men had their deserts, who would escape whipping?'

"To-day we attended the morning penitence at six o'clock, in the church of San Francisco, the hardest part of which was their having to kneel for about ten minutes with their arms extended in the form of a cross, uttering groans, a most painful position for any length of time. It was a profane thought, but I dare say so many hundreds of beautifully-formed arms and hands were seldom seen extended at the same moment before. Gloves not being worn in church, and many of the women having short sleeves, they were very much seen.

"But the other night I was present at a much stranger scene, at the discipline performed by the men, admission having been procured for us by certain means, *private but powerful*. Accordingly, when it was dark, enveloped from head to foot in large cloaks, and without the slightest idea of what it was, we went on foot through the streets to the church of San Agustin. When we arrived, a small side door apparently opened of itself, and we entered, passing through long vaulted passages, and up steep winding stairs, till we found ourselves in a small railed gallery looking down directly upon the church. The scene was curious. About one hundred and fifty men, enveloped in cloaks and sarapes, their faces entirely concealed, were assembled in the body of the church. A monk had just mounted the pulpit, and the church was dimly lighted, except where he stood in bold relief, with his gay robes

a party of boys, report says, being somewhat skeptical about the quality of this blood, concealed themselves in

and cowl thrown back, giving a full view of his high, bald forehead and expressive face.

"His discourse was a rude but very forcible and eloquent description of the torments prepared in hell for impenitent sinners. The effect of the whole was very solemn. It appeared like a preparation for the execution of a multitude of condemned criminals. When the discourse was finished, they all joined in prayer with much fervor and enthusiasm, beating their breasts and falling upon their faces. Then the monk stood up, and in a very distinct voice read several passages of Scripture descriptive of the sufferings of Christ. The organ then struck up the *Miserere*, and all of a sudden the church was plunged in profound darkness, all but a sculptured representation of the Crucifixion, which seemed to hang in the air illuminated. I felt rather frightened, and would have been glad to leave the church, but it would have been impossible in the darkness. Suddenly a terrible voice in the dark cried, 'My brothers! when Christ was fastened to the pillar by the Jews, he was *scourged!*' At these words the bright figure disappeared, and the darkness became total. Suddenly we heard the sound of hundreds of scourges descending upon the bare flesh. I can not conceive any thing more horrible. Before ten minutes had passed, the sound became *splashing* from the blood that was flowing.

"I have heard of these penitencies in Italian churches, and also that half of those who go there do not really scourge themselves; but here, where there is such perfect concealment, there seems no motive for deception. Incredible as it may seem, this awful penance continued, without intermission, for half an hour! If they scourged *each other*, their energy might be less astonishing.

"We could not leave the church, but it was perfectly sickening; and had I not been able to take hold of the Senora ——'s hand, and feel something human beside me, I could have fancied myself transported into a congregation of evil spirits. Now and then, but very seldom, a suppressed groan was heard, and occasionally the voice of the monk encouraging them by ejaculations, or by short passages from Scripture. Sometimes the organ struck up, and the poor wretches, in a faint voice, tried to join in the *Miserere*. The sound of the scourging is indescribable. At the end of half an hour a little bell was rung, and the voice of the monk was heard calling upon them to desist; but such was their enthusiasm, that the horrible lashing continued louder and fiercer than ever.

"In vain he entreated them not to kill themselves, and assured them that heaven would be satisfied, and that human nature could not endure beyond a certain point. No answer but the loud sound of the scourges, which are many of them of iron, with sharp points that enter the flesh. At length, as if they were perfectly exhausted, the sound grew fainter, and little by little ceased altogether. We then got up in

the church, and when the pious farce began, took so active a part in the sport upon the naked backs of the fathers, as to inflict bodily injury, and break up the bloody entertainment. Still Protestantism has been felt in Mexico, if not embraced, and the common people look back to the happy time when the soldiers of their Protestant conquerors made money plenty among them, and when even-handed justice was dealt out alike to rich and poor, high and low. Though the foreigners laughed at the fables of the priests and ridiculed the monks, they yet were honest in their dealings with the people instead of taking by violence. As there are no people so besotted that they do not admire courage and honesty, so the *Paisano* looks upon the heretic as a man of a superior race to himself.

the dark, and with great difficulty groped our way in the pitch darkness through the galleries and down the stairs till we reached the door, and had the pleasure of feeling the fresh air again. They say that the church floor is frequently covered with blood after one of these penances, and that a man died the other day in consequence of his wounds."
—*Life in Mexico*, vol. ii. p. 213.

CHAPTER XXX.

The Necessity of large Capitals in Mexico.—The Finances and Revenue.—The impoverished Creditors of the State.—Princely Wealth of Individuals.

HAVING spoken of the Church, the great power which overawes the government, it is also proper to mention the secondary powers: the men of colossal fortune. In a country like Mexico, whose wealth arises from mines of silver, these immense private fortunes are requisite to the successful development of its resources. Large capitals must be constantly hazarded on the single chance of striking a *bonanza*, in an adventure as uncertain as a game of *monté*. An abandoned mine often turns out to be the treasury of an untold fortune to the man who was laughed at for attempting its restoration, while the most promising adventure proves a total failure. The temptations to these adventures are dazzling in the extreme. The ambitious man forgets the shame and irretrievable ruin that follows a failure, and looks only to the chances of winning a title of nobility and "a house full of silver." Men who shun the gambling-table will adventure all on a mine, and in a year or two they have passed from the memory of men, for they have become poor. Again, a man of slender means has become rich in the Mexican sense, which means a man of millions, and then he is at once elevated by his admirers into that brilliant constellation which is the "great bear" of the Mexican firmament.

Still, these powerful private individuals prevent the consolidation of any government, whether republican or

dictatorial, and put far off that certain event, the confiscation of the estates of the Church. If there is a Congress in session, its members are influenced as our own are influenced. They are swayed this way and that by private interests. When Congress is not in session, they are constantly operating upon the treasury, or, rather, the minister of the treasury is diving about among them to raise the means to keep afloat from day to day. They will not submit to their full share of taxation. When they advance money on the pledge of some income, it is on the most onerous terms, so that at least one quarter of the revenue of Mexico is used up in interest or usury. Long experience has reduced the business of shaving the revenue to a system. The most common way to do this is to buy up some claim at twelve and a half cents on a dollar, and then couple it at par with a loan of money on the assignment of some *rent*. Every thing is farmed out, until at last, two years ago, Escandon proposed to farm the whole foreign revenue.

Many a time have I sat down in the large ante-room of the treasury to look upon and study the characters of those who have come there to be disappointed, when promises will no longer satisfy hunger. One poor woman had got a new promise in 1851, and three months' interest, on money *deposited* with the Consolado of Vera Cruz, and invested in 1810 in building the great road of Perote. Santa Anna, on his return, gave her a new order, and she presented it to the minister with bright hopes, when he gave her fifteen dollars—all he had in the treasury. The best way to collect a debt at Mexico is to convert it into a foreign debt, if possible, and then, if there is a resident that stands high with his minister, the matter meets with prompt attention. He that can buy a foreign embassador at Mexico has made a fortune.

I have spoken of two rich men of Mexico, the first Count of Regla, and one who has succeeded to his mine. As I was standing on the Paséo, a lad passed driving a fine span of mules. "That is the Count de Galvez," said my companion, "the son of the late Count Perez Galvez, the lucky proprietor of the *bonanza* in the mine of La Suz at Guanajuato."

"But that *bonanza* has given out," said I.

"No matter; this boy's inheritance is sometimes estimated at $9,000,000." A snug capital with which to begin the world!

Laborde, the Frenchman who projected and established the magnificent garden at Cuarnavaca, and also built, from his private fortune, the great Cathedral of Toluca, made and spent three princely fortunes in successful mining, and at last ended his checkered career in poverty. The Countess Ruhl, the mother of young Galvez, and her brother the Count Ruhl, are also fortunate miners. The latter is now interested in the *Real del Monte.* But the rich man of the Republic is the Marquis de Jaral, in the small but rich mining department of Guanajuato. This man's wealth surpasses that of all the three patriarchs put together. A few years ago, the whole amount of his live-stock was set down by his *administrador* (overseer) at three million head. He then sent thirty thousand sheep* to market, which yielded him from $2 50 to $3 a head, or from $75,000 to $90,000 annually. The goats slaughtered on the estate amounted to about the same number, and yielded about the same amount of revenue. Besides all this, there is his annual product of horses and cattle, and corn and grain fields many miles in extent. Truly this Marquis of Jaral is a large farmer. But as I said of mining, so I may also say that large capitals are necessary to carry

* Ward's *Mexico*, vol. ii. p. 470.

on agriculture successfully in the vast elevated plains of the northern, or, rather, interior departments, for the whole value of the valley of Jaral consists in an artificial lake, which an ancestor of the present proprietor constructed before the Revolution for the purpose of irrigation; for, without irrigation, his little kingdom would be without value. I might speak of many other landed proprietors whose estates are princely, but none are equal to Jaral. Indeed, all men of wealth possess landed estates. It is the favorite investment for successful miners to purchase a *few* plantations, each of a dozen leagues or so, under cultivation.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Visit to Pachuca and Real del Monte.—Otumba and Tulanzingo.—The grand Canal of Huehuetoca.—The Silver Mines of Pachuca.—Hakal Silver Mines.—Real del Monte Mines.—The Anglo-Mexican Mining Fever.—My Equipment to descend a Mine.—The great Steam-pump. —Descending the great Shaft.—Galleries and Veins of Ore.—Among the Miners one thousand Feet under Ground.—The Barrel Process of refining Silver.—Another refining Establishment.

An opposition line of stages upon the road that extends sixty miles from the city of Mexico to the northern extremity of the valley has brought down the fare to $3. It is a hard road to travel in the wet season, and not a very interesting one at any time. Three miles of causeway across the salt marsh brought us to the church and village of our Lady of Guadalupe Hidalgo. From this place we passed for several leagues along the barren tract that lies between the two salt-ponds of San Cristobal and Tezcuco, and soon arrived at Tulanzingo, where the great battle of the Free-masons was fought, and where eight poor fellows lost their lives in the bloody encounter. This, and the horrible battle of Otumba, which Cortéz fought a little way east of this spot, are memorable events in the history of Mexico—more memorable than they deserve to have been.

As we rode along the eastern rim of the valley, the sun was shining brightly on the western hills that inclosed it. The opening made by the canal of Huehuetoca was plain in sight. To read about this canal and to derive an idea of it from books is to get an impression that here, at least, the Spaniards did a wonderful work. But to look at it is to dissipate all such compliment-

ary notions. The engineer who planned it may have been a skillful man, but the government that fettered his movements, like all Spanish governments of those times, consisted of a cross between fools and priests. Even those pious gamblers, the Franciscans, had a finger in the business. After absorbing, for near a hundred years, the revenue appropriated to completing the work, they abandoned it to the merchants of Mexico, who finally finished it. The pond that was to be drained by it, the Zumpango, was certainly an insignificant affair. There was nothing farther of interest until we arrived at Pachuca.

Pachuca is the oldest mining district in Mexico. In its immediate vicinity are the most interesting silver mines of the republic. These mines were the first that were worked in the country, and immediately after the Conquest they were very productive. They were worked for generations, and then abandoned; again resumed after lying idle for nearly a century, and worked for almost another hundred years; and then once more abandoned, and resumed again while I was in Mexico. They now produce that princely revenue to Escandon and Company of which I have already spoken.

The Hakal (*Haxal*) mine in part belonged to the number of those which the English Real del Monte Company worked on shares, with poor success, for twenty-five years. It lies about three fourths of a mile from the village of Pachuca. That company devoted their chief attention to the mines upon the top of the mountain, at an elevation of 9057 feet, and seven miles distant from this place, and these mines were comparatively neglected. The new company, immediately upon taking possession, devoted particular attention to the Hakal, which resulted in their striking a *bonanza*,* in the Ro-

* A very rich portion of a vein is called a *bonanza*.

sario shaft, which was yielding, from a single small shaft, about $80,000 a month, if I recollect rightly.* The ore of this mine is of a peculiar quality, and its silver is best separated from the scoria by the smelting process, of which I shall treat more fully when I come to speak of the mines of Regla. The Guadalupe shaft, close by the Rosario, was doing but little when I was there, as it does not belong to the same proprietors. On the night of my arrival they had just completed the work of pumping the water out of the San Nicholas shaft, famous for the immense amount of silver taken from it in the early period of the mining history of Mexico.

Mounted on a good horse, and followed by a lackey, I rode up the zigzag carriage-road which the English company constructed a quarter of a century since in order to convey their immense steam machinery to the top of the mountain, some seven miles distant. This road is still kept in a good state of repair, and forms a romantic drive for those who keep carriages in the mountains. The sun was shining upon the cultivated hills and rolling lands far below us as we jogged along our winding way up the mountain. At every turn in the road new beauties presented themselves. But it was getting too chilly for moralizing, and both lackey and I were pleased when we reached the village upon the top of the mountain, which bears the name of Real del Monte. The house of entertainment here is kept by an English woman, who seems to be a part of the mining establishment. While in her domicile, I found no occasion to regret that I was again elevated into a cold latitude.

More than thirty years have passed since that second South Sea delusion, the Anglo-Spanish American min-

* Mr. Thomas Auld, the director of the company, furnished me very accurate data in relation to affairs, but these are with my other losses at New Orleans.

ing fever, broke out in England. It surpassed a thousand-fold the wildest of all the New York and California mining and quartz mining organizations of the last five years. Prudent financiers in London ran stark mad in calculating the dividends they must unavoidably realize upon investments in a business to be carried on in a distant country, and managed and controlled by a debating society or board of directors in London. Money was advanced with almost incredible recklessness, and agents were posted off with all secresy to be first to secure from the owner of some abandoned mine the right to work it before the agent of some other company should arrive on the ground. No mine was to be looked at that was not named in the volumes of Humboldt, and any mine therein named was valued above all price. In the end, some $50,000,000 of English capital ran out, and was used up in Mexico. It was one of those periodical manias that regularly seize a commercial people once in ten years, and for which there is no accounting, and no remedy but to let it have its way and work out its own cure in the ruin of thousands. It is the same in our own country.*

* Before leaving California, a young man in my office, who had been using some of my money which he could not replace, proposed to repay me in a certificate printed in red ink, which certificate declared that I had paid $2000 toward the capital stock of ——— Mining Company; Capital Stock, $250,000; signed Col. ———, President, a gentleman a little in arrears at his boarding-house, and my defaulting young man was secretary. Rather an unpromising show that, as the property consisted of a tavern, built of canvas upon Colonel Fremont's Maraposa grant, on the principle of squatter sovereignty. Near by the squatter had dug a promising hole, and if only money and machinery could be had, *perhaps* he might realize something from it. The young man assured me that they had an agent in New York negotiating for machinery, and in a few months they would be able to declare dividends. Biting my lips to suppress a hearty laugh, I put the paper printed with red ink into my pocket.

On my arrival in New York, I was thunderstruck at seeing a gilded sign stuck up on the Merchants' Exchange: "——— MINING COMPANY

After a hearty breakfast at the tavern, I called at the office, or, as it is here called, "the Grand House" (*Casa Grande*), and was introduced by Mr. Auld, the director, to the foreman, who took me to the dressing-room, where I was stripped, and clad in the garb of a miner except the boots, which were all too short for my feet. My rig was an odd one; a skull-cap formed like a fireman's, a miner's coat and pants, and my own calf-skin boots. But in California I had got used to uncouth attire, and now

OFFICE." Not over-troubled by modesty, I ventured in, and inquired if that machinery had been sent out. I was requested to be seated in a fine cushioned chair. As I love entertainment, I sat down, and took a survey of the desks, the Brussels carpet, the ledgers, and the piles of pamphlets, which clearly demonstrated that a man would get his money back many times over before he paid it in. It seemed strange how all this could be supported on the supposed future earnings of a hole in the ground. The Board of Directors assembled. Many of them, I was assured, were the leading men of New York, and things went off with all solemnity. When all was ready, an immense piece of the richest gold quartz was taken from a desk, such as used to be sold at good prices in San Francisco for this very purpose. But not a man in that august assembly dreamed of the manner in which such things are gotten up, except perhaps the said agent sent out to get machinery, but now figuring as a director. I was easily prevailed on to sign an argumentative certificate, and was shown one signed by Robert J. Walker on a much worse hole in the ground than this. I was also informed that New York was not the proper market, which I understand to mean that machinery could not be obtained in New York on the credit of a quartz vein; and in London they would not look at a scheme that did not embrace a million at least, said the agent aforesaid. Therefore he proposed to give me an engraved certificate, declaring that I had paid $8000, which of course I readily accepted when I found that there was no machinery in the case, and that all I had to rest my engraved certificate upon was the one hundredth part of the said hole in the ground, with a doubtful title. The last I heard of this agent was, that he was traveling with his wife upon the Rhine. Whether he was in search of machinery or not, I did not stop to inquire.

Instead of the above being an extraordinary case, I understand that it is about a fair average of the California gold schemes that have been brought upon the stock-market of New York. If the papers are only drawn up in the proper form, the most prudent men in Wall Street are sometimes found to embark their capital before the question has ever been settled whether gold can be successfully obtained from quartz in California.

thought nothing of such small matters. We therefore walked on without comments to the house built over the great shaft, where my good-natured English companion, the foreman, stopped me to complete my equipment, which consisted of a lighted tallow candle stuck in a candlestick of soft mud, and pressed till it adhered to the front of my miner's hat. Having fixed a similar appendage to his own hat and to the hat of the servant that was to follow us, we were considered fully equipped for descending the mine.

While standing at the top of the shaft, I was astonished at the size and perfect finish of a steam-pump that had been imported from England by the late English mining company. With the assistance of balancing weights, the immense arms of the engine lifted, with mathematical precision, two square timbers, the one spliced out to the length of a thousand, the other twelve hundred feet, which fell back again by their own weight: these were the pumping-rods, which lifted the water four hundred feet to the mouth of a tunnel, or *adit*, which carried it a mile and a quarter through the mountain, and discharged it in the creek above the stamping-mill. There is a smaller pump, which works occasionally, when the volume of water in the mines is too great for the power of a single pump.

A trap-door being lifted, we began to descend by small ladders that reached from floor to floor in the shaft, or, rather, in the half of the shaft. The whole shaft was perhaps fifteen or twenty feet square, with sides formed of solid masonry, where the rock happened to be soft, while in other parts it consisted of natural porphyry rock cut smooth. Half of this shaft was divided off by a partition, which extended the whole distance from the top to the bottom of the mine. Through this the materials used in the work were let down, and the ore drawn up

in large sacks, consisting each of the skin of an ox. The other half of the shaft contained the two pumping timbers, and numerous floorings at short distances; from one to another of these ran ladders, by which men were continually ascending and descending, at the risk of falling only a few feet at the utmost. The descent from platform to platform was an easy one, while the little walk upon the platform relieved the muscles exhausted by climbing down. With no great fatigue I got down a thousand feet, where our farther progress was stopped by the water that filled the lower galleries.

Galleries are passages running off horizontally from the shaft, either cut through the solid porphyry to intersect some vein, or else the space which a vein once occupied is fitted up for a gallery by receiving a wooden floor and a brick arch over head. They are the passages that lead to others, and to transverse galleries and veins, which, in so old a mine as this, are very numerous. When a vein sufficiently rich to warrant working is struck, it is followed through all its meanderings as long as it pays for digging. The opening made in following it is, of course, as irregular in form and shape as the vein itself. The loose earth and rubbish taken out in following it is thrown into some abandoned opening or gallery, so that nothing is lifted to the surface but the ore. Sometimes several gangs of hands will be working upon the same vein, a board and timber floor only separating one set from another. When I have added to this description that this business of digging out veins has continued here for near three hundred years, it can well be conceived that this mountain ridge has become a sort of honey-comb.

When our party had reached the limit of descent, we turned aside into a gallery, and made our way among gangs of workmen, silently pursuing their daily labor in

galleries and chambers reeking with moisture, while the water trickled down on every side on its way to the common receptacle at the bottom. Here we saw English carpenters dressing timbers for flooring by the light of tallow candles that burned in soft mud candlesticks adhering to the rocky walls of the chamber. Men were industriously digging upon the vein, others disposing of the rubbish, while convicts were trudging along under heavy burdens of ore, which they supported on their backs by a broad strap across their foreheads. As we passed among these well-behaved gangs of men, I was a little startled by the foreman remarking that one of those carriers had been convicted of killing ten men, and was under sentence of hard labor for life. Far from there being any thing forbidding in the appearance of these murderers, now that they were beyond the reach of intoxicating drink, they bore the ordinary subdued expression of the Meztizo. According to custom, they lashed me to a stanchion as an intruder; but, upon the foreman informing them that I would pay the usual forfeit of cigaritos on arriving at the station-house, they good-naturedly relieved me. Then we journeyed on and on, until my powers of endurance could sustain no more. We sat down to rest, and to gather strength for a still longer journey. At length we set out again, sometimes climbing up, sometimes climbing down; now stopping to examine different specimens of ores that reflected back the glare of our lights with dazzling brilliancy, and to look at the endless varieties in the appearance of the rock that filled the spaces in the porphyry matrix. Then we walked for a long way on the top of the aqueduct of the adit, until we at last reached a vacant shaft, through which we were drawn up and landed in the prison-house, from whence we walked to the station-house, where we were dressed in our own clothes again.

When my underground wanderings were ended, and dinner eaten, it was too late in the day to visit the refining works; but on the next morning, bright and early, I was in the saddle, on my way to visit the different establishments connected with this mine. First, upon the river, at the mouth of the adit, was a stamping-mill, where gangs of stamps were playing in troughs, and reducing the hard ore to a coarse powder. A little way farther down the stream the ore was ground, and then, in blast ovens or furnaces, was heated until all the baser metals in the ore became charged with oxygen to such a degree that they would not unite with quicksilver. The ore was then carried and placed in the bottom of large casks, and water and quicksilver were added, and then they were set rolling by machinery for several days, until the silver had formed an amalgam with the mercury, while the baser metals in the ore were disengaged from the silver. The whole mass being now poured out into troughs, the scoria was washed off from the amalgam, which was gathered and put into a stout leathern bag with a cloth bottom, and the unabsorbed mercury drained out. The amalgam, resembling lard in appearance, being now cut up into cakes, and placed under an immense retort, fire was applied; the mercury, in form of vapor, was driven through a hole in the bottom of the platform into water, where it was condensed, while the silver remained pure in the retort. This is called the barrel process, and is used for certain kinds of ore.

I had come self-introduced to the Real del Monte, but that had not prevented my receiving the accustomed hospitality of the establishment. A groom and two of their best horses were at my service during my stay. As the weather was fine, and the roads of the first class of English carriage-ways, I heartily enjoyed the ride down the mountain gorge until it opened upon the broad

plain where the second refining establishment, that of Vincente, is situated. Except that the iron floors of their blast ovens were made to revolve while in a state of red heat, all was substantially the same as at the last place. Following the meanderings of the stream, I had been gradually descending from the sharp air of early spring to the more appropriate temperature of the tropics, as I had occasion to notice in looking into the fine garden of the English director, which exhibited both the fertilizing effects of irrigation upon English flowers, and the advantages of tropical heat upon native varieties.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

A Visit to the Refining-mills.—The Falls and basaltic Columns of Regla.—How a Title is acquired to Silver Mines.—The Story of Peter Terreros, Count of Regla.—The most successful of Miners.—Silver obtained by fusing the Ore.—Silver "benefited" upon the Patio.—The Tester of the Patio.—The chemical Processes employed.—The Heirs of the Count of Regla.—The Ruin caused by Civil War.—The History of the English Company.

We rode along the stone road across the plain, passing now a number of English-made wagons laden with stamped ore for Regla, and then a drove of cargo-donkeys trudging along under the weight of bags filled with the rich ore of Hakal. Now and then, too, we encountered American army-wagons converted to peaceful employment, and adding to the material wealth of Mexico. But our ride was not a long one before we reached Regla, the utmost limit of our journeyings, a distance of twelve miles from the "Real." Here the first salutation from the English gentleman at the head of the establishment was that breakfast was waiting, as it was now eleven o'clock, and we must not visit the works upon an empty stomach. My surprise at this unlooked-for hospitality was a little diminished when I learned that all these entertainments of strangers are at the company's expense.

The *patio*, or open yard of Regla, on which the principal portion of the ores of the Real del Monte company are "benefited," or, as we should say, extracted, is situated deep down in a *barranca*, where both water-power and intense heat can be obtained to facilitate the process of separation. The immense amount of mason-work here expended in the erection of massive walls would

make an imposing appearance if they had been built up in the open plain; but here they are so overshadowed by the mason-work of nature that they sink into insignificance in comparison. The bank, some two hundred feet high, of solid rock, as it approaches the waterfall on either side, has the appearance of being supported by natural buttresses of basaltic columns—columns closely joined together and placed erect by the hand of nature's master-builder. Still, all would have been stiff and formal had the sides of the *barranca* been lined only with perpendicular columns; but broken and displaced pillars are piled in every conceivable position against the front, while a vine with brilliant leaves had run to every fissure and spread itself out to enjoy the sunshine. The little stream that had burst its way through the upright columns and over the broken fragments, fell into a perfect basin of basalt, heightening immensely the attractions of the spot. I sat down upon a fallen column, and for a long time continued to contemplate the unexpected scene, of which, at that time, I had read nothing. There was such a mingling of the rich vegetation of the hot country with the rocky ornaments of this pretty waterfall that I could never grow weary of admiring the combined grandeur and beauty of the place, from which Peter Terreros derived his title of Count of Regla.

Peter Terreros, the first Count of Regla, became one of the rich men of the last century in consequence of a lucky mining adventure. In olden times the water in the Real del Monte mines had been lifted out of the mouth of the Santa Brigeda and other shafts in bulls' hides carried up on a windlass. When near the surface, this simple method of getting the water out of a mine has great advantages on account of its cheapness, and is now extensively employed in Mexican mines. But after a certain depth had been reached, the head of water

could no longer be kept down by this process, and, in consequence, the Real del Monte was abandoned about the beginning of the last century, and became a complete ruin; for no wreck is more complete than that which water causes when it once gets possession of a mine, and mingles into one mass floating timbers, loosened earth, rubbish, and soft and fallen rock. By the mining laws of Mexico, the title to a mine is lost by abandoning and ceasing to work it. It becomes a waif open to the enterprise of any one who may "re-denounce" it. The title to the soil in Mexico, as in California, carries no title to the gold and silver mineral that may be contained in the land. The precious metals are not only regarded in law as treasure-trove, but they carry with them to the lucky discoverer the right to enter upon another person's land, and to appropriate so much of the land as is necessary to avail himself of his prize. Colonel Frémont's Mariposa claim, and all other California land claims, are subject to this legal condition.

Peter Terreros, then a man of limited means, conceived the idea of draining this abandoned mine by means of a tunnel or adit (*socabon*) through the rock, one mile and a quarter in length, from the level of the stream till it should strike the Santa Brigeda shaft. Upon this enterprise he toiled with varied success from 1750 until 1762, when he completed his undertaking, and also struck a *bonanza*, which continued for twelve years to yield an amount of silver which in our day appears to be fabulous. The veins which he struck from time to time, as he advanced with his *socabon*, furnished means to keep alive his enterprise. When he reached the main shaft, he had a ruin to clear out and rebuild, which was a more costly undertaking than the building of a king's palace. Yet his *bonanza* not only furnished all the means for a system of lavish expenditure upon the mines and refin-

ing-works, but from his surplus profits he laid out half a million annually in the purchase of plantations, or six millions of dollars in the twelve years. This is equal to about 500,000 pounds' weight of silver. Besides doing this, he loaned to the king a million of dollars, which has never been paid, and built and equipped two ships of the line, and presented them to his sovereign.

The humble shop-keeper, Peter Terreros, after such displays of munificence, was ennobled by the title of Count of Regla. Among the common people he is the subject of more fables than was Crœsus of old. When his children were baptized, so the story goes, the procession walked upon bars of silver. By way of expressing his gratitude for the title conferred upon him, he sent an invitation to the king to visit him at his mine, assuring his majesty that if he would confer on him such an exalted favor, his majesty's feet should not tread upon the ground while he was in the New World. Wherever he should alight from his carriage it should be upon a pavement of silver, and the places where he lodged should be lined with the same precious metal. Anecdotes of this kind are innumerable, which, of course, amount to no more than showing that in his own time his wealth was proverbial, and demonstrate that in popular estimation he stood at the head of that large class of miners whom the wise king ennobled as a reward for successful mining adventures, and that he was accounted the richest miner in the vice-kingdom. The state and magnificence which he oftentimes displayed surpassed that of the Vice-king. This in no way embarrassed an estate, the largest ever accumulated by one individual in a single enterprise.

Count Peter is estimated to have expended two and a half millions of dollars upon the buildings constituting the refining establishment of Regla, which goes under

the general designation of the *patio*. Why his walls were built so thick, or why so many massive arches should have been constructed, is an enigma to the present generation, as they could by no means have been intended for a fortress down in a *barranca*.

But let us go in and examine the different methods of "benefiting" silver here applied. The ores from the Rosario shaft of the Hakal mine of Pachuca are here stamped and ground, and then thrown into a furnace, after having been mixed with lime, which in fire increases the heat; while upon the open *torta* we shall see that lime is used to cool the mass. Litharge (oxide of lead) is added, and the mass is burned until the litharge is decomposed, the lead uniting with the silver and the oxygen entering into the slag, into which the baser metals, or scoria in the ore, have been formed. This is cast out at the bottom of the furnace. The mass of molten lead and silver is drawn off, and placed in a large oven with a rotary bottom, into which tongues of flame are continually driven until the lead in the compound has become once more oxydized, forming litharge, and the silver is left in a pure state. This is the most simple method of purifying, or "benefiting" silver.

A little beyond the furnace is a series of tubs, built of blocks from broken columns of basalt. In the centre of each revolves a shaft with four arms, to each of which is fastened a block of basalt, that is dragged on the stone bottom of the tub, where broken ore mixed with water is ground to the finest paste. Here the chemical process of "benefiting" commences. A bed is prepared upon the paved floor (*patio*) in the yard, in the same manner as a mortar bed is prepared to receive quicklime dissolved in water. In the same way is poured out the semi-liquid paste. This is called a *torta*, and contains about 45,000 lbs. Upon this liquid mass four

and a half *cargas* of 300 lbs. of salt is spread, and then a coating of blue vitriol (sulphate of copper) is laid over the whole, and the tramping by mules commences. If the mass is found to be too hot for the advantageous working of the process, then lime in sufficient quantities is added to cool it; and if too cool, then iron pyrites (sulphate of iron) is added. The mules are then turned upon the bed, and for a single day it is mixed most thoroughly together by tramping and by turning it over by the shovel. On the second day 750 lbs. of quicksilver are added to the torta, and then the tramping is resumed.

The most important personage, not even excepting the director, is called "the tester;" for the condition of the ores varies so much, that experience alone can determine the mode of proceeding with each separate *torta*, and upon the tester's judgment depends oftentimes the question whether a mining enterprise, involving millions of dollars, shall prove a profitable or unprofitable adventure. Perhaps he can not read or write, though daily engaged in carrying on, empirically, the most difficult of chemical processes. To him is intrusted the entire control of the most valuable article employed in mining —the quicksilver. He is constantly testing the various *tortas* spread out upon the *patio;* to one he determines that lime must be added; to another, an opposite process must be applied by adding iron pyrites. When all is ready, with his own hands he applies the quicksilver, which he carries in a little cloth bag, through the pores of which he expresses the mercury as he walks over and over the *torta*, much after the manner that seed is sown with us. The tester determines when the silver has all been collected and amalgamated with the mercury. Whether the tramping process and the turning by shovels shall continue for six weeks or for only three, is de-

cided by him. When he decides that it is prepared for washing, the mass is transported to an immense washing machine, which is propelled by water, where the base substances are all washed from the amalgam, and then the amalgam is resolved into its original elements of silver and quicksilver by fire, as already explained, with the loss of about seventy-five to one hundred pounds of mercury upon each *torta.*

Let us now run over the many chemical processes that have been resorted to in order to separate the silver from the ore. The roll-brimstone, that has been procured in Durango, or in the volcano of Popocatapetl, is bought up at the mint in the city of Mexico, where it is burned in a room lined with lead, and into which water is jetted until the smoke of the burning brimstone is condensed. This water of sulphur is then carefully collected, and distilled in a boiler of platinum, on which sulphur can not act. The sulphuric acid obtained by this distillation is used to separate the gold that is found in the silver bars from silver. This sometimes amounts to ten per cent. The acid dissolves the silver, but does not act upon the gold, which is thus separated from the silver. The sulphate of silver is drawn off and poured upon plates of copper, by which means the silver is precipitated, and sulphate of copper, or blue vitriol, is produced, which, not being of use in the mint, is sold to the Real del Monte Company, where it is employed in obtaining silver. The process by which the company obtain their salt has been already stated, while the lime they use is burned upon the mountains. After all these hard and laborious processes, only from five to ten per cent. of silver is obtained, except in cases of *bonanzas*, which shows that silver mines can be profitably worked only in those countries where labor commands the lowest standard of wages.

The heirs of the Count Peter inherited his accumulated treasures, his purchased estates, his title, and his prospects of future success in mining, which were as brilliant as they had been in his lifetime. They never dreamed of financial embarrassments in the midst of accumulations of wealth which surpassed the wildest of Oriental romances. They forgot that their wealth rested upon the perfect security which they inherited from the wise and virtuous government of Carlos III., of blessed memory; that he it was who had put out the fires of the Inquisition, and so curtailed the power of the priests that they could no longer plunder with impunity, or rob the Terreros of the fruits of their father's enterprise by threatening them with the censure of the Church, which, in the reign of a feeble king, had a significant meaning. The new code of mining laws, the cheapness of quicksilver, and the opening of commerce, had all combined to make their fortune, which they might lose in a moment if the heir to the throne should prove an idiot, as was most likely, and priests should again usurp the control of affairs, and play their old game of plundering the rich while they excited the populace.

Fortunately for the family of Terreros and the many successful mining families of that period, Charles IV. was not quite so much of an idiot as his grandfather or his great-grandfather had been, and though the Inquisitors resumed their fires, yet it was with such comparative moderation as not to interfere seriously with the progress of that prosperity to which Carlos III. had given an impulse. The Countess of Regla still sported the richest jewels to be found in New Spain, and her sister's coronet was the envy of all the ladies of the court. But the insurrection of Hidalgo came upon them in the midst of prosperity, overwhelming alike the rich and the poor. The large Spanish capitals began to be withdrawn from

the country, the plantations were broken up, and the mines, abandoned by their laborers, soon fell to ruin; and they who had been baptized in the midst of the most ostentatious display of wealth, found themselves pinched to sustain their ordinary expenses.

The Terreros family kept their title good to the Real del Monte by retaining a few workmen about the premises; but it was substantially abandoned for twenty-five years before the English Real del Monte Company took possession. In the space of two years this company had cleared out and rebuilt the adit by working gangs of hands night and day. Another party, engaged upon the shafts, arrived at the adit level at the same time with the workmen upon the drain. A third party, engaged in making and repairing a carriage-road from the sea to the mine, had completed their labors; while a fourth party, in charge of machinery and steam-power apparatus enough to equip a Cornish mine of the largest class, had arrived at the mine. In this fourfold, and much of it useless labor, the company had exhibited untiring activity, while they exhausted all their capital without realizing the return of a single dollar. But they derived rich hopes from reading the story of Peter Terreros, and they continued to hope on and hope ever, for a period of twenty-five years longer, when they ceased to exist. The story of this company is summed up in saying that they expended upon this vast enterprise the sum of $20,000,000, and realized from it $16,000,000. They disposed of all their interests here for about what their materials were worth as old iron, and the present proprietors enjoy the fruits of their labors at a cost of less than a million of dollars, with a fair prospect of yet realizing from their speculation as large a treasure as that acquired by Peter Terreros, the first Count of Regla.

Having thus described with some minuteness one of

the most extensive silver mines in the world, where an average of 5000 men and unnumbered animals are employed, it will not be necessary to go into details as we notice the many other celebrated mines of Mexico.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Toluca.—Queretaro, Guanajuato, and Zacatecas.—Fresnillo.—"Romancing."—A lucky Priest.—San Luis Potosi.—The Valenciana at Guanajuato.—Under-mining.—A Name of Blasphemy.—The Los Rayas.—Immense Sums taken from Los Rayas.—Warlike Indians in Zacatecas.

A STAGE runs daily from the city of Mexico by Tacubaya and the Desierto to the beautiful valley and city of Toluca. This town is greatly indebted for its present celebrity to successful mining adventures. Its Cathedral is a monument of the munificent liberality of the Frenchman Laborde, whose fortune was ever unequal to his generosity. We have spoken already of the almost Oriental magnificence displayed in the famous garden which he built and adorned at Cuarnavaca. After spending the wealth acquired from the *bonanza* of Tasco, he started off in search of new adventures and a new fortune. Being again successful, he made Toluca the beneficiary of his princely liberality. The celebrated Cathedral of that city, and all its ornaments, are the proofs of his munificence. When his third fortune was exhausted, the fickle goddess forsook him, and he who had three times been raised from nothing to the condition of a millionaire, came in his old age to the archbishop for relief from his poverty. This relief he obtained by selling the jewels he had once bestowed upon the Church. Such often are the vicissitudes in the life of a successful miner. I can not notice here the many interesting objects gathered as I would wish to do, nor have I space for a description of the beautiful mountain scenery about Toluca.

The middle states of Mexico, Guanajuata, Zacatecas,

Durango, and San Luis, are deserving of a more extended notice than my limited space will permit. There is little of war or romance to recount in the history of any of them. Their story is made up of notices of silver mines, and times of great *bonanzas* and cattle-raising. Here the population is mostly white, made up of the hardy peasantry from Biscay. The Indians on the high table-lands were too hardy to be reduced to slavery: the result is the same here as in Chili. The two races have not extensively intermixed, as the Indians were driven northward, where, for a period of three hundred years, they have, in a measure, maintained their independence, and have so much improved in the art of war that they are able to return again and fight for the homes of their ancestors. The white inhabitants of these states are more cleanly in their habits, and more industrious than the Southern people. The little state of Queretaro has little to boast of but its agriculture, but to the north of it is a country of mines and pasturage.

There was formerly great rivalry between the states of Guanajuato and Zacatecas on the ground of their mining successes. Each in turn has had its season of boasting, for it has happened that, in those years when Guanajuato was most prosperous, Zacatecas was not in *bonanza*, and *vice versa*. When I was first in Mexico, San Luz and San Luce, at Guanajuato, were in *bonanza*, with divers others; and out of $300,000 in silver bars brought down to the city of Mexico, nearly ten per cent. of gold was extracted. But now both these *bonanzas* have given out, and the annual product of silver in the State of Guanajuato has fallen off over $2,000,000, while the mines of Zacatecas are in a most flourishing condition, as is shown by the large sum of $1,200,000 being demanded by government for renewing the lease of the mint at Zacatecas.

Fresnillo is the most flourishing of the mines of Zacatecas. This mine was formely considered of little value. Among its advantages is an American manager, who for many years has aided in the direction of its affairs. On my return from Mexico, I found the road up the Perote covered with wagons laden with portions of a monster steam-engine, the fifth that was to be employed to pump the water from this mine. It seems incredible that so large a sum as $1,000,000 should be required for the freight alone of this new machinery. But, after I had become familiar with the vast scale on which every thing is conducted at a large silver mine, where millions appear as the small dust of the balance, I can credit what my readers might think improbable.*

I have often spoken of the peculiarities of peasant life in the country and of the *peons* of the cities. But there is another phase of humble life to be considered—the social state of the mine laborer. Like all men whose wages are very irregular, and subject to the fluctuations which follow mining speculations, they themselves become irregular in their lives. They have all heard of the many instances of persons of as humble condition as themselves accidentally falling upon a princely fortune, and they know, too, what a miraculous change such a discovery makes in the social condition of a *peon*, for every miner in Zacatecas knows the homely distich:

"Had the metals not been so rich at San Bernabe,
Ibarra would not have wed the daughter of Virey."†

In addition to scraps and snatches of songs, the mining laborers have their *romances*, which are as wild as the *yarns* of the sailor, and have for their almost univer-

* By reference to a long and able paper on the mines in the hill of Proano (Fresnillo), it appears that one half of the cost of four pumping-engines already in operation in that mine was the freight from Vera Cruz to the mine.

† This translation is bad enough, but no worse than the original.

sal theme the miraculous acquisition and loss of a fortune. The hero possesses princely wealth to day, though yesterday he was suffering for food, and to-morrow he will be again bereft of all by the fickle turns that Fortune makes in the wheel of destiny. The wildest of our romances never come up to many incidents that have occurred in their own mine; and when they attempt fiction, it is on the pattern of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. I do verily believe that all that class of Arabian tales are but the reproduction of the *romances* from the Oriental gold-washings.

The most important mines in the State of San Luis Potosi are those near Cuatorce. In the midst of bleak and precipitous mountain ridges is the village of Cuatorce, from which a circuitous mountain road leads to the entrance of the mining shafts, in which more wonderful things have occurred than in the wildest of the "romances." The story of Padre Flores is a familiar one, but will bear repeating.

The padre, being tired of the idle life of a pauper priest, bought, for a small sum, the claim of some still more needy adventurer. After following his small vein a little way, he came to a small cavern containing the ore in a state of decomposition. This, in California, would be called a "rotten vein." With all the difficulties to be encountered in obtaining a fair value for mineral in a crude state, the poor priest realized from his adventure over $3,000,000, which was considered a very fair fortune for an unmitred ecclesiastic.

The Mineral Report, mentioned in the last note, which is so full on the subject Fresnillo, insists that it is a continuation of the formation of Cuatorce and the other mines of San Luis. The mountains at Cuatorce are more dreary, bleak, and barren than in any other of the principal mining districts, as it is more exposed to the storms

and tempests from the northeast and from the ocean. It was in this State of San Luis Potosi that Dr. Gardner's quicksilver mine was alleged to exist, and in the ineffectual efforts made to determine its whereabouts our government has become quite familiar with the location of all the worked mines of this state. The mines upon the mountains of Cuatorce are said to have been discovered in 1778 by a negro fiddler, who, being compelled to camp out on his way home from a dance, built a fire upon what proved to be an outcrop of a vein, and, in consequence, found in the morning, among the embers, a piece of virgin silver. It is a doubtful question among those who are anxious about trifles whether the name *Potosi* given to this mine, owes its origin to the similarity between the mode of its discovery to that of the celebrated mines of that name in South America, or to the vast amount of silver at one time taken from it.

Guanajuato, when it yielded its six millions a year of silver, besides a fair supply of gold, was one of the most important States in the republic. With every successful speculation, new adventurers were found to invest their capital in resuming the working of abandoned mines, until at last men have become bold enough to undertake, for the third time, the draining of the great shaft of the Valenciana, so famous in the last century. When I was last in Mexico that undertaking was reported to have been accomplished. This mine is on a more magnificent scale than even the Real del Monte. Its central shaft alone cost a million of dollars; and though steam power can not be used, yet it is so dry that horse windlasses can keep it clear of water. Its abandonment in every instance has been in consequence of some insurrectionary chief setting the works of the mine on fire, and not from any deficiency in its product of silver. When I was in Mexico, so little progress had been made in re-

storing the mine that it was not thought worth visiting. But the most sanguine hopes were entertained that it would again be as productive as in the times when its abundant riches secured for its owner the title of Marquis of Valenciana, though he had worked with his own hands on the shaft which afterward yielded him its millions.

Second in importance among the old mines of Guanajuato is *Los Rayas.* Its history presents a new feature in the mining system of Mexico, not before mentioned, but which is important to a right understanding of the operation of the mining code. The right of discovery gives title to two hundred *varas* along the mine, and to two hundred *varas* (about 500 feet) in depth. The consequence of this limitation is, that when a very rich claim is made, there immediately springs up a contest to get below it, and to cut off the lucky discoverer from the lower part of his expected fortune, and he has no means of avoiding such a result but by driving his shaft downward until he reaches a point below his first two hundred *varas*, which entitles him to claim another section downward.

This principle is strikingly illustrated in the case of the famous mine of the priest Flores at Cuatorce, which he blasphemously named "the Purse of God the Father,"* where there are marks of divers attempts being

* This will sound to Protestant readers something like horrible blasphemy; but it must be borne in mind that God the Father of the Catholics is an entirely different idea from the spiritual God whom we worship. The devout Protestant who recognizes but one Being worthy of adoration, veneration, and worship, never ventures to mention any of the names by which He is known but with the profoundest reverence. The Catholic, on the other hand, has a host of objects which he deems worthy of adoration, and seems to have cheapened the article by multiplying it. His senses are all exercised in his peculiar kind of worship, and, as a natural consequence, they are apt to conclude that the Almighty enjoys those exhibitions that give them the greatest pleasure.

made to undermine him, though without success. But the case is a different one when the *bonanza* is upon a high ridge, and it can be undermined by drifting in from a lower level. Then commences a lively contest to determine who can dig the fastest, and make the most rapid progress in this contest of mining and undermining.

The Marquis de los Rayas owes his title and his princely fortune of $11,000,000 to a successful contest of this character. The Santa Amita was in *bonanza*, yielding an ore so pregnant with gold that the crude mass often sold for its weight in silver.

They worship him by performing a pantomime of the life and suffering of Christ, which is called the mass, and seek to propitiate him by offering the body of his Son in sacrifice. They bestow upon God gifts of jewels and of gold; and as he passes through their streets in the form of a wafer, as they believe, the soldiers present arms, beat the drum, and discharge their cannon, as to an earthly prince. Though our Saviour (*Santo Christo*) heads the calendar of intercessors between God and man, he is seldom invoked, though they often honor him by naming their children after him. As they have conferred upon a multitude of their saints the supernatural powers of God, they have necessarily brought God himself down to earth. If I might be pardoned the expression, I should say that they treat him and his well-beloved Son with a loving intimacy. The worship of the Catholics is substantially materialism, more or less gross, according to its distance from or its proximity to Protestantism. There is no blasphemy, according to their system, in naming their shops after the Holy Ghost, a horse-stable after "the Precious Blood," though I could never hear them mentioned or see them without having my Protestant notions shocked, while I equally shocked their feelings by refusing to kneel to the Host, and slipping out of the way to avoid it. Nor could I exhibit the least reverence to their religious emblems without committing what in me would be an act of idolatry, the two systems being so diametrically opposite that one can not go a step toward the other without breaking over a fundamental doctrine of his own belief. God is an invisible Spirit, says the Protestant. God is a Spirit, answers the Catholic, but he daily assumes the form of a wafer, and traverses our streets, and in that form we most commonly worship him. Such is the religious antagonism that will ever be found in the world while man remains what he now is, ever divided between mentalism and materialism. Forms and names often differ, but these are the two ideas into which all the religious systems of the world resolve themselves, although abortive attempts are often made to combine them.

Contests of this kind are very different from those which used to take place in California some years ago, when twenty feet square was marked off upon the top of a ridge, through which the claimant had to sink his shaft to the base rock on which the gold was supposed to be deposited. When the rock was reached, it was often found difficult to keep the lines that had been marked off on the surface, particularly when the lead grew richer as it approached the border of the claim. Controversies were frequent, and frequently resulted in subterranean quarrels and fights, and, of course, ended in superterranean lawsuits. But the Mexican rival parties were seldom near enough for a fight, and the quarrel ended, as it began, in a contest to determine who could dig the fastest.

Another peculiar feature of deep mining is the construction of the main shafts. A description of the method of construction of one of these I take from Ward's Mexico,* a book that is otherwise of little value to a person seeking for information on the subject of mines at Guanajuata, so great has been the revolution there in a few years in the condition of mining affairs: "I know few sights more interesting than the operation of blasting in the shafts of Los Rayas. After each quarryman (*barretero*) has undermined the portion of rock allotted to him, he is drawn up to the surface; the ropes belonging to the horse-windlasses (*malacates*) are coiled up, so as to leave every thing clear below, and a man descends, whose business it is to fire the slow matches communicating with the mines below.

"As his chance of escaping the effects of the explosion consists in being drawn up with such rapidity as to be placed beyond the reach of the fragments of rock that are projected into the air, the lightest *malacate* is pre-

* Vol. ii. p. 452.

pared for his use, and two horses are attached to it, selected for their swiftness and courage, and are called the horses of *pegador*. The man is let down slowly, carrying with him a light and a small rope, one end of which is held by one of the overseers, who is stationed at the mouth of the shaft. A breathless silence is observed until the signal is given from below by pulling the cord of communication, when the two men by whom the horses are previously held release their heads, and they dash off at full speed until they are stopped either by the noise of the first explosion, or by seeing from the quantity of cord wound round the cylinder of the *malacate* that the *pegador* is already raised to a height of sixty or seventy *varas* [Spanish yards], and is consequently beyond the reach of danger."

The author then goes on to enumerate the risks that attend this calling of *pegador*, and the consequent high wages that have to be paid to persons who undertake this perilous office, all of which accidents and adventures must be familiar to those of my readers who have paid any attention to the business of blasting rocks; and as his hairbreadth escapes have nothing in them remarkable, we may conclude this notice of Los Rayas by adding his statement that the king's fifth from this mine, from 1556 to his time, amounted to the snug sum of $17,365,000. He gives only the sum reported, and makes no calculation for the large sums out of which the king was annually cheated at all the mines. That my reader may understand how a sum so apparently incredible as five or eight times seventeen millions of dollars could be taken out of a single mine, he must recollect that Los Rayas was a most productive mine shortly after the Conquest, and that for a century or two it was comparatively of little value, until Mr. José Sardaneta undertook the undermining of the rich mine of Santa Amita

in 1740, and that afterward the rich product of the lower levels of the Santa Amita are included in this immense sum.

There is too much sameness in the details of the histories of the various other important mines of this State and of those in the adjoining State of Durango to justify the lengthening out this chapter, and I will conclude it with giving the substance of a statement I heard the American gentleman make on the subject of Indian depredations in the very centre of the republic, showing the great inconvenience suffered in consequence of the state of insecurity in which the people constantly live. A party of their own Indians, a most degraded band of cowardly vagabonds, that lived not a great way from the city, concluded to personify a company of northern savages, in order more successfully to plunder the inhabitants. With shoutings, these vagabonds rushed into the houses of the people, who were so paralyzed by the very sight of Indians in a hostile attitude, that, without resistance, they suffered them to plunder whatever came within their reach which tempted their cupidity or lust. At length, becoming satiated with liquor and champagne that they had taken from a carrier, they had to retire and camp out for the night. In their retreat they were pursued by a captain and soldiers of the regular army, who, being more numerous than the Indians, exhibited a great deal of courage until they came in sight of the savages, when, all at once, it was concluded to encamp for the night, and to resume the pursuit the next day, when the Indians would be at such a distance that they would not disturb their pursuers by their whooping.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Sonora and Sonora Land Speculators seeking Annexation.—Sonora and its Attractions.—The Abundance and Purity of Silver in Sonora.—Silver found in large Masses.—The Jesus Maria, Refugio, and Eulalia Mines.—A Creation of Silver at Arizpa.—The Pacific Railroad.—Sonora now valueless for want of personal Security.—The Hopes of replenishing the Spanish Finances from Sonora blasted by War.—Report of the Mineria.—Sonora.—Chihuahua.

It has been said in another chapter that the Apaches had extended their depredations beyond the first tier of States, and had entered Durango, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosi, and even Guanajuato, making this second tier of states their stamping ground, while Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, over which they now rode without opposition to a country more abundant in plunder, are left as political waifs to any who may choose to take possession of them. As in all abandoned countries, there are inhabitants here incapable of getting away, and too poor even for the Indians to notice; and there are a few miserable villages still existing, with a fragment of their former population. All the inhabitants of these wretched hamlets have their eyes fixed on the United States as the only hope of relief from their Indian plunderers. The proprietors of estates, extending over vast districts, too cowardly to defend their claims, which exceed in extent European principalities, are sitting quietly down at a respectful distance, anxiously looking forward to the time when their claims will rise in value from a few dollars to as many hundred thousands by an annexation to the United States. Mexican operators in grants have not been idle. They have ascertained what the United

States courts call a title, and have been providing themselves with the necessary parchments,* while American operators, in connection with them, have been equally busy.

Chihuahua and Sonora are the States or Departments to be affected by our Pacific Railroad. Sonora is the most valuable of the two, not only on account of its inexhaustible supply of silver, but also on account of its delightful climate and agricultural resources. It is like the land of the blessed in Oriental story. California does not surpass it in fertility or in climate. With industry and thrift, it could sustain a population equal to that of all Mexico. The table-lands and the valleys are so near together that the products of all climates flourish almost side by side. Food for man and beast was so easily procured that the descendants of the early settlers sunk into effeminacy long before the breaking out of the great Apache war of the last century. Drought, however, makes the formation of artificial lakes and reservoirs necessary to the full development of its agricultural wealth.

But it is the remarkable abundance of silver which distinguishes it above all other countries except Chihuahua. I have described, in a former chapter, the long and laborious processes by which silver is produced from the ore in the southern mines, and also the great depths

* When I was first at the city of Mexico, Governor Letcher introduced to me a son of the late emperor, who had a claim for land in California which he had not located before the annexation. I advised him, without a fee, that our courts did not recognize foreign "floats," and that, by his own *laches*, he had lost his claim, which he now spread along the Sacramento River for 400 miles. Finding out, after an expenditure of several thousand dollars, the defect, he got a new claim from the late President Lombardini of thirty miles square, which he will probably now pin tight in Sonora. The defect of our two last treaties with Mexico was in not having a clause inserted reducing all titles to land to six miles square, as a consideration for the enhanced value by the annexation.

from which it is raised. In Sonora, silver is most commonly extracted from the ore by the simple process of fusion. But in the district of Batopilos, it is, or rather was, found pure. If we should adopt the theory that veins of ore extend through the entire length of Mexico, then I should say that they "crop out" in Sonora, or, rather, that the silver *lodes* which are here above the surface dip toward the city of Mexico, and also northward toward California. The mountain chain which traverses California under the name of the *Sierra Nevada* appears to be only a continuation or reappearance of the mountain chain here called *Sierra Madre* (Mother Range), which forms the boundary between the departments of Sonora and Chihuahua.

On the western declivity of this mountain range, the most remarkable illustration of this fact of cropping out is found at Batopilos, already mentioned. This town is in a deep ravine. The climate is, like that of the California gulches, intensely hot, but remarkably healthy. Here the *lodes* of silver ore are almost innumerable,* with crests elevated above the ground. The mine of *El Carmen*, in the times of the vice-kings, produced so immensely that its proprietor was ennobled, with the title of Marquis of Bustamente. This was the beginning of the family of Bustamente. A piece of pure silver was found here weighing four hundred and twenty-five pounds. I should like to continue in detail to enumerate the rich surface mines in the southern portions of these two States, but, lest I should weary my reader, I must omit them,

* I would not like to make such extravagant statements on my own authority, however satisfactory the testimony might be to myself, for the abundance of silver in Sonora is beyond the belief of most men. But, fortunately, I have, in Ward's "Mexico," an authority that can not be disputed. The work is accessible to all my readers. The author was charged by the British government with an examination of the mines of Mexico.

and refer those who wish to learn more to the translations from the last official reports of the *Mineria*, entitled Chihuahua and Sonora, which are embodied in the Appendix.

"The 'Good Success Mine' (*Bueno Successo*) was discovered by an Indian, who swam across the river after a great flood. On arriving at the other side, he found the crest of an immense *lode* laid bare by the force of the water. The greater part of this was pure massive silver, sparkling in the rays of the sun. The whole town of Batopilos went to gaze at the extraordinary sight as soon as the river was fordable. This Indian extracted great wealth from his mine, but, on coming to the depth of three Spanish yards (*varas*), the abundance of water obliged him to abandon it, and no attempts have since been made to resume the working. When the silver is not found in solid masses, which requires to be cut with the chisel, it is generally finely sprinkled through the *lode*, and often serves to nail together the particles of stone through which it is disseminated."*—"The ores of the *Pastiano* mine, near the *Carmen*, were so rich that the *lode* was worked by bars, with a point at one end and a chisel at the other, for cutting out the silver. The owner of the Pastiano used to bring the ores from the mine with flags flying, and the mules adorned with cloths of all colors. The same man received a reproof from the Bishop of Durango when he visited Batopilos for placing bars of silver from the door of his house to the great hall (*sala*) for the bishop to walk upon."†

The next mine of interest in our progress northward is the *Morelos*, "which was discovered in 1826 by two brothers named Aranco. These two Indian *peons* were so poor that, the night before their great discovery, the keeper of the store had refused to credit one of them for

* WARD, vol. ii. p. 578. † Ibid.

a little corn for his *tortillas*. They extracted from their claim $270,000; yet, in December, 1826, they were still living in a wretched hovel, close to the source of their wealth, bare-headed and bare-legged, with upward of $200,000 in silver locked up in their hut. But never was the utter worthlessness of the metal, as such, so clearly demonstrated as in the case of the Arancos, whose only pleasure consisted in contemplating their hoards, and occasionally throwing away a portion of the richest ore to be scrambled for by their former companions, the workmen."

Near the Morelos is the *Jesus Maria*. Though on the western or Sonora slope of the mountain, it is only eight leagues from Chihuahua. This, like Morelos, is a modern discovery, and, of course, was not included in the number of those Sonora mines which produced such an intense excitement about a hundred years ago in Mexico, and even in Spain. Here, within the circuit of three leagues, two hundred metallic *lodes* were registered in one year. The story of the mine of *El Refugio*, discovered by a fellow of the name of Pacheco, gave occasion for anecdotes like those of the Arancos which we have just recited. A dealer had an old cloak which took the fancy of Pacheco, and to purchase this thing he gave ore from which the dealer realized $8000. Three twenty-fourths (three bars) of the product of this mine netted, between the years 1811 and 1814, $337,000. On the Sonora side of the mountain is *Santa Eulalia*. The ores of this *real* [district] are found in loose earth, filling immense caverns, or what are called "rotten ores" in California, and are easily separated by smelting. One shilling a mark ($8) was laid aside from the silver which one of these caverns produced, which shilling contribution constituted the fund out of which the magnificent Cathedral of Chihuahua was built.

Proceeding northward, we come to a spot the most famous in the world for its product of silver, the mine of *Arazuma.* For near a century, the accounts of the wealth of this mine were considered fabulous; but their literal truth is confirmed by the testimony of the English embassador. After examining the old records which I have quoted, I have no doubt that the facts surpassed the astonishing report; for in Mexico, the propensity has ever been to conceal rather than over-estimate the quantity of silver, on account of the king's fifth; yet it is the king's fifth, *actually paid*, on which all the estimates of the production of Sonora silver mines are based. Arazuma (which, in the report of the Mineria that I have translated for this volume, appears to be set down as Arizpa) was, a hundred years ago, the world's wonder, and so continued until the breaking out of the great Apache war a few years afterward. Men seemed to run mad at the sight of such immense masses of virgin silver, and for a time it seemed as if silver was about to lose its value. In the midst of the excitement, a royal ordinance appeared, declaring Arazuma a "creation of silver" (*creador de plata*), and appropriating it to the king's use. This put a stop to private enterprise; and, after the Indian war set in, Arazuma became almost a forgotten locality; and in a generation or two afterward, the accounts of its mineral riches began to be discredited.

We have the following record in evidence of the masses of silver extracted at Arazuma. Don Domingo Asmendi paid duties on a piece of virgin silver which weighed 275 lbs. The king's attorney (*fiscal*) brought suit for the duties on several other pieces, which together weighed 4033 lbs. Also for the recovery, as a curiosity, and therefore the property of the king, of a certain piece of silver of the weight of 2700 lbs. This is probably the largest piece of pure silver ever found in the world, and

yet it was discovered only a few miles distant from the contemplated track of our Pacific Railroad.

I might continue enumerating the instances of mineral wealth brought to light in these two states, Sonora and Chihuahua, if I supposed it would be interesting to my readers; but as they have heard enough of silver, I may add that rich deposits of gold were found at Molatto in 1806, and a still greater discovery of gold was made a few years ago. In this latter discovery, the poor diggers suffered so much from thirst that a dollar was readily paid for a single bucket of water, and at length, by reason of the drought, this rich *placer* had to be abandoned.

Such is Sonora, a region of country which combines the rare attractions of the richest silver mines in the world, lying in the midst of the finest agricultural districts, and where the climate is as attractive as its mineral riches. But its richest mineral district is near its northern frontier, and is almost inaccessible, and can never be advantageously worked without an abundant supply of mineral coal for smelting; nor can any of its mines or estates be successfully worked without greater security for life and property than at present exists. The capitalists of Mexico will not invest their means in developing the resources of Sonora, and in consequence, the finest country in the world is fast receding to a state of nature. I found in the Palace at Mexico a copy of the last report of the Governor of Sonora upon the state of his Department, in which he mentions, among many other causes of its decadence during the last few years, the extensive emigration of its laboring population to California.

Extravagant as are these statements of the mineral riches of Sonora, they probably do not come up to the reality, as the largest of them are founded on the sums

reported for taxation at the distant city of Mexico, when it was notorious, as already stated, that a large portion of the silver was fraudulently concealed in order to avoid the taxes. Such concealment could be successfully carried on in a region so distant and inaccessible as Sonora was in the time of Philip V., for it was in the reign of that idiot king, before the liberal mining-ordinances of Carlos III., that the Sonora mining-fever broke out.

A hundred years have passed since the once formidable Apaches swept over northern Sonora like a deluge, blotting out forever the hopes which the Spanish court had conceived of retrieving the fallen finances of their empire from this *El Dorado.* But Providence had ordered it otherwise. The Spaniards had done enough to demonstrate its inexhaustible wealth, and then they were driven away from this "creation of silver,"* and the whole deposit held for a hundred years in reserve for the uses of another race, who were destined to overrun the continent.

I should have but half performed my task should I omit to speak of the excellent bay and harbor of Guaymas, in the southern part of Sonora. After San Francisco, it is the finest harbor on the Pacific, and is the natural route through which our commerce with the East Indies should be directed. The long experience of Spain taught her that a western route to the East Indies was so much superior to the one by the Cape of Good Hope as to compensate for a transhipment of all of her East India merchandise upon mules' backs from Acapulco to Vera Cruz. Much more advantageous must it be to us, when a railroad from El Paso, passing through the midst

* I do not know exactly how to translate the Spanish idea attached to the words *creador de plata* unless by saying that it is a spot where baser substances are supposed to be converted into silver by some unknown process of nature.

of the silver district I have described, shall transfer our commerce with Japan and China to the Pacific side of our continent. Here the very silver necessary for the purchase of tea is nearly as abundant as tin in some of the European mines, and, as in California, the prospects held out to the farmer are equal to mineral attractions.

It would be folly for our government to acquire Sonora without first providing for connecting it with our country by railroad, and equally foolish to acquire it without making provision, in the treaty of acquisition, for reducing all land-titles to the size of a single township, in consideration for the superior value given to the property by the annexation, and for annulling all land-titles under which there is not an actual occupancy. The Spanish courts concede to government this power over private rights, and for this reason a treaty of acquisition from Mexico would prevent the confusion that now exists in California, and enable American settlers to locate understandingly at once. All titles should continue to be subject, as they now are, to the right of the miner to enter in search of precious metals, thus no conflicts in relation to the rights of land-owners and miners could arise. The principle on which the Mexican mining laws and the California mining customs are established should be recognized by the United States. But that right of entry would not arise until the construction of a railroad should afford the means of actually reducing the country to possession, which Spain never has accomplished, and Mexico never can accomplish.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Objections to the Arrangement of the Book answered.—Sifting the Testimony of Cortéz and Diaz.—Why California was woven into the Narrative.—No material Change in the Face of the Country.—The Aztecs not to be confounded with the Ancient Inhabitants of the "Hot Country."—No corroborative Evidence.—Human Sacrifices.—Which is a Hero, Cortéz or Walker?

As I write this chapter more than four months after the first appearance of the book, it is proper here to answer the objections that have been urged against the arrangement of subjects discussed, and against itinaries narrated out of their chronological order. The itinary from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico was placed at the beginning of the volume, not because it was first in order of time, but because it presented a greater variety of objects of interest in traversing a shorter distance, and offered a more ready means of introducing the reader to the country, and to the various classes of its inhabitants, than the monotonous twelve days' journey by which I first entered the Republic of Mexico. Had I been true to chronology, I should have been false to my reader; for the impressions made on first entering a country are the ones that a reader is most apt to retain, which impressions, in this case, would have been most false, as the twelve days' journey was almost exclusively confined to the country of the *Pintos*, who are at Mexico looked upon as a foreign race, and whose present occupation of that capital is regarded by both parties as an act of conquest.

The evidences that led me step by step from the most

implicit belief in the conquest by Cortéz, to the entire discrediting of that romantic portion of American history, I preferred to take up in the precise order in which they had presented themselves in the midst of my itinaries and researches, that they might have their full force upon the reader's mind, and at the same time the reader might have the means of judging whether I had or had not given them too much weight in summing up the testimony. Since the date of the conquest sufficient time has elapsed to authorize the receiving of the popular histories of that event as traditional evidence of the truth of statements in which they all concur. But evidence by tradition applies only to free countries, or countries where entire freedom of discussion has been allowed in relation to the subject-matter of the tradition. This not being the case in countries whose literature was regulated by the Inquisition, time has added nothing to the credibility of the statements of Cortéz or of Bernal Diaz, and we are at liberty to sift them in the same manner as we would depositions that were but yesterday brought into court. And they were properly examined at the same time with the physical evidence that was taken on the spot of the pretended achievements. And as the opinions of the person collecting the evidence may be of some value to the reader in coming to a conclusion, they have been added to each statement of fact; while the public are put in the position of an intelligent jury, who are required to consider together the items of evidence in making up their verdict.

The approved histories of the conquest of Mexico by Cortéz, and the approved histories of the three several visits of the Virgin Mary in person at Guadalupe, rest on precisely the same kind of testimony, and are believed in Spain and Mexico, not because such evidence is of itself entitled to belief, but solely on the ground that the

statement of the interested party in either case has been adjudged sufficient by the proper authorities of the Church to make out the adventures of Cortéz to have been a holy war, and the alleged interviews between *Juan Diego* and the Virgin Mary to have been miraculous. Disregarding the Spanish rule of evidence in such cases, all Protestants, by common consent, have pronounced *Juan Diego* an imposter or a deluded man. But there was a difficulty in the way of treating Cortéz, the hero of his own holy war, in the same manner; for if we "stripped off the fine robe of romance" which Cortéz had thrown over the Indian chief, Montezuma, and from present appearances pronounced him only a barbarous Indian, inhabiting a mud island in an *everglade*, we should fail to account for the sudden wealth and prosperity that attended the first inroad of the Spaniards into that section of our continent. The few years of American occupation of California—a country strikingly similar to Mexico in its native population and physical resources—solves this difficulty completely. Hence I transported my reader to the west coast of the continent, and from my three years' residence in California gathered up materials to elucidate what, before the settlement of California, had been explainable only on the supposition that a high state of civilization had existed among a very inferior race of North American Indians at the time of the advent of the Spaniards.

Had the conquest of Mexico been a subject open for free discussion at the time the history of Bernal Diaz purports to have been written, we might credit the motive assigned by the author as the true reason for its publication, and the admissions which go to establish his own infamy and that of Cortéz we might well charge to the moral callousness of a hoary *Conquistador*. But when we take into the account the extreme sensitiveness

of the *qualificators* of the Inquisition for the fame of the hero of a holy war, the only conjectural motive that we can arrive at is, that on account of the exalted position of Las Casas some of his statements may have become public, notwithstanding the suppression of his book; and hence a book had to be written that admitted that Cortéz was something less than a saint, while it saved all the glory of the holy war. The ingenious method by which Diaz attempts to save the naval engagement in the cornfields at Iztapalapa, by pretending that the face of the country had entirely changed in his day, was probably to get around one of Las Casas's exposures; for the face of the country has not materially changed to this day, as is shown by the foundations laid by Cortéz himself in different parts of the valley. And the very fact that Cortéz had to change the position of Tezcuco from north of the city to due east, in order to bring water about the capital, shows that the marshes were just then as they now are; while the slight Aztec barrier, running from Iztapalapa to Guadalupe, through a portion of the pretended lake, demonstrate that Iztapalapa, as well as Guadalupe, was then upon dry ground. And as there is but two and a half feet between the present level of the city and the water-level, if there had been a lake instead of a marsh, every heavy wind that blew in that windy valley would have driven the water quite over the city. So that there has been no material change in the physical condition of the valley, as some critics have suggested.

It is not best to be too sensitive on the subject of criticism, nor does an author act wisely who gets angry because defects in his work are pointed out by some ill-natured reviewer. He ought rather to be thankful that even an ill-natured critic has thrown some light on the subject of his investigations, and in this way called his

attention to oversights and omissions which he has still the opportunity to supply in subsequent editions. So, too, in sifting the writings of others. If both Cortéz and Bernal Diaz are unworthy of credit according to our law of evidence, unless corroborated it is our duty to search after corroborative evidence before finally rejecting them; and if none can be found, we are still at liberty to credit their statements in points where they had no motive to distort the truth. There is always some truth in every falsehood, and though it may require a laborious effort to pick it out, yet truth is so valuable a commodity that the world can not afford to lose it. In this spirit I have had to reduce the great commonwealth of Tlascala to a tribe of barbarous Indians, as the statements of both witnesses have been shown flatly to contradict each other on the material point, and both their statements are physically impossible. In like manner, each material statement in relation to the Aztecs has a physical impossibility to surmount before becoming credible. The narrative and the reality are so completely at variance, as to induce the belief that the whole of the narrative of the adventures of Cortéz is but a copy of some Moorish romance, or of some Aztec tradition of the civilized race that once inhabited the Hot Country. The whole country of the Aztecs is utterly devoid of romance, and particularly the salt marsh which occupies the Valley of Mexico; while the few relics of civilization found at that city appear more like trophies brought from the Hot Country than the product of Aztec art, so completely out of place are they in the midst of surrounding barbarism.

There is so little evidence either way, and so strong a motive for the two witnesses to falsify the truth upon the point of human sacrifices, that I have passed it over, not liking to supply the place of evidence with speculation. The Aztecs doubtless practiced all the cruelties

customary among Indian tribes upon their captives taken in war. But whether they had actually exchanged the religion of the Indians for the religion of the inhabitants of the Hot Country, is one of the mysteries that have perished with them. The gods of the enemies have in all ages been the most common trophies of war; but whether the Aztecs adopted them as their own gods, or only threw them in the heaps where they are now found, must, of course, be left to speculation. The evidence seems almost irresistible that the builders of the ruined cities of the Hot Country indulged in human sacrifices. Their architecture, their images, and particularly the "long cross,"* bear so strong a resemblance to those of the Canaanites (Phœnicians) who offered up even their own children to their abominable divinity, as to lead to this conclusion. How much of all this was traditional, how much of this was real, and how much was fabricated in order to throw lustre upon the holy war, can now be only a subject of speculation; and in this business of guessing readers are probably as expert as the author. They have the facts before them; they can draw their own conclusions.

Not only has California furnished a solution of the mystery that once hung over the early history of the vice-kingdom of Mexico, but she has also furnished a man to demonstrate how easily a conquest greater than that of Cortéz can be effected by apparently inadequate means. The State of Nicaragua is greater in extent than the whole empire of Montezuma, and far more productive. Beneath the rank vegetation of its luxuriant soil are the unmistakable remains of that civilized empire, the only mere glimmerings of whose greatness had reached the Indian village of Mexico, long after its

* This cross was the emblem of "Ashteroth, the abomination of the Sidonians" (Astartee). See JONES's *Ancient America*, p. 152.

records and its people had passed into oblivion. The poor degraded Indians that wandered over the ruined foundations of that extinct empire, and gazed stupidly upon its pyramids, had tamely submitted to the yoke of the Spaniards, and new cities had grown on the shores of its enchanting lakes. But after three hundred years of Spanish rule the "Kingdom of Guatemala" had fallen to pieces, and, while daily contests raged in the severed States for the sovereignty, Walker, with less than a hundred effective men, made himself master of Nicaragua, without any of the tricks, finesse, or falsehoods that distinguished Cortéz at Mexico, but by straightforward courage and fair dealing. The whole world frowned upon the audacious young man, and he did not hesitate to frown back upon the world. His own country discarded him, and he returned the favor by doing what no government of Europe would presume to do—he dismissed the American Minister. He banished Kinney, annexed the Mosquito Coast, revoked the charter of the Transit Company, and when all Central America was combined against him, he invaded Costa Rica, in defiance of the English and French ships of war sent for its defense. And while all the world, by a common consent, are denouncing Walker, the author here takes the liberty to make himself an exception, and to declare, of his own knowledge, that William Walker has the reputation, where personally known, of an honest and honorable man; and is more entitled to the rank of a hero than a thousand such poltroons as Cortéz, who have risen to glory by clinging fast to the apron-strings of the Virgin Mary. And if Walker ultimately succeeds, the civilized world will be the gainer.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Where we left Santa Anna and Alvarez.—Santa Anna retires to Cartagena.—Alvarez made President.—The Capital submits to the Pintos.—Alvarez's Entry into Mexico.—Mr. Comonfort, the present President of Mexico.

The reader parted from his Serene Highness, Santa Anna, at the National Palace, just escaped out of the country of the Pintos. His large and elegantly-equipped army had rapidly followed him, harassed at every step of its retreat by the peasantry of the country, who, seizing their weapons, rushed to the nearest mountain-pass to annoy the cowardly hosts in their retreat. But why they retreated at all, or why they had not taken the castle of Acapulco and its handful of defenders, at the first assault, was a mystery. The stars, and ribbons, and gilded uniforms that Santa Anna had lavished upon his officers failed to infuse courage into their craven souls; and, as they fled from their own shadows, they fully demonstrated the utter demoralization that has taken place in the Castilian race in Mexico. In the mountains we parted with Alvarez, who, with Comonfort, a gentleman of the country, was carrying on a guerrilla war against the armies of Santa Anna. By flying before the army when it advanced, and hovering around it when it retired, Comonfort gradually wore out his enemies.

Now there came a crisis in the affairs of Santa Anna. The $7,000,000 were exhausted. The bishops, on whom he had lavished so many favors, and whom he had created *ex-officio* Councilors of State, would not disgorge

any funds in the hour of his greatest necessity. The very size and strength of an army is the greatest source of danger when there is neither money nor provisions for daily consumption. In such a case, a military insurrection is unavoidable, and now it was anticipated by a hasty flight from the country. Near the beautiful city of Cartagena, upon the South American coast, Santa Anna had long before provided for himself an elegant country residence, where he might spend in quiet his declining years. This quiet retreat he had quitted to try the experiment of Louis Napoleon in Mexico, but meeting with an obstacle in the person of his old associate, Alvarez, he prudently returned again to his former rural occupations. Thus ends the latest episode of Santa Anna in Mexican history. And we may hope that it is the last time that he will disturb his domestic quiet by dipping into the muddy waters of Mexican politics. Mexico is not the place, nor are the Mexicans the people to sustain an empire.

The next chapter of Mexican history opens with a *pronunciamiento* at the city of Mexico in favor of the Plan of Ayutla, as the declaration of principles of Alvarez was called. The soldiery and the rabble of the city were the loudest in shouting, because they had the least at stake in any revolutionary movement that could take place. The aristocracy and the dignitaries of the Church nominally gave their adhesion to the new order of things, at least until the storm should blow over, while one of their own creatures was hastily installed in the vacant Presidency. This done, a messenger was dispatched to urge Alvarez to hasten on to the capital, and, as the revolution was now accomplished, the suggestion was made to him to leave his Pintos behind him in their own country. Alvarez had other designs than that of putting himself in the power of these heartless men, or of trust-

ing his success to the favor of the rabble. He accordingly made his head-quarters at *Cuarnavaca*, and began to draw around him an army of Pintos. The mushroom government that had been installed at the capital soon sent in its abdication to Alvarez, and ultimately this old war-chief was proclaimed President at Mexico, as well as at his head-quarters. While the new President delayed his entry into the city, the most strenuous efforts were making to collect the largest possible force of *Pintos*, and, at the same time, to disperse the garrison of the capital. When 5000 of this kind of rustic soldiery (Pintos) had been collected, and the regular soldiers of the garrison dispersed, the new government was prepared to enter Mexico.

All classes at the capital now had forebodings of what would soon take place; for the Pintos are as much considered foreigners at the city of Mexico as were the Americans; with this difference, that the Americans were considered men of good caste, while the Pintos are looked upon as a servile race. And yet they saw no alternative but to submit to such laws as these Indians and Meztizos might impose upon them. The descendants of the *Conquistadors* were reluctantly consenting to be domineered over by an army of Indians. The authorities of the Church feared for the privileges and revenues which they had enjoyed from the time of the vice-kings. But there was no remedy; for the city rabble dreaded as much as they hated the Pintos, and no miracle, however potent or judiciously mixed with bad liquor, could induce them to raise a shout for the rights of the Church. There were no more military parades—no more military bands discoursing sweet Italian airs in the Plaza on Sabbath evenings. The army had lost caste since these rude mountain peasants had worsted it. In sullen silence the citizens waited the approach of their plebeian

conquerors, as they had before waited the entry of the American army.

At length the advent of Alvarez, so long expected, with his 5000 Pintos, took place. The Indian army entered the city by the same causeway over which Cortéz with his white brigands had passed three and a half centuries before. A strange army was this of the Pintos. Their dusky skins were covered with spots, as though they had been sprinkled with indigo. An old straw hat—a striped blanket, with a slit for the head to pass through, serving as covering by night and coat by day—together with a pair of ragged cotton drawers, constituted their uniform. Now and then one rejoiced in the luxury of shoes, but the majority contented themselves with sandals. They strode along like persons unaccustomed to military exercise, but with a self-possession which showed that they saw nothing to fear in the elegant city they had captured. When these men reached the Plaza, and took possession of the Palace, it was curious to mark the strong contrast of present appearances with the scenes that took place here when the "Royal and Imperial Order" of Guadalupe was installed, a few months before. The guards that then kept the Palace had more lace and more brilliant armor, but less courage. Then despotic power waited on the caprice of a turbulent soldiery; but now the new President rested securely under the guard of his faithful Pintos, whose courage none could doubt, and whose faithfulness all admired.

Matters becoming quiet at the capital, Alvarez surrendered the Presidency to his friend Comonfort, and returned, with a large quantity of military stores, into his own country. Of this man, Comonfort, the President of to-day, I have already spoken, of my personal knowledge, as a plain, practical business man, who has had

more experience in raising sugar than in leading armies. Yet he has so far carried with him into public life the maxims of common sense that distinguished him as a private citizen. Whether he acted wisely in assailing at once those two great monopolies, the Church and the Army, it is not for me to judge, though nothing would seem to be more just than to restrict the jurisdiction of Ecclesiastical and Military Courts to controversies arising among their own orders. But it is better to tolerate many abuses than to risk the consequences of a civil war like that which has just terminated in the siege and capture of Puebla, and the destruction of more personal property and the infliction of more individual suffering than all the exactions of the clergy would amount to in a twelve-month. We should ever hope for the best. We should hope that this honest and industrious man may yet be able to consolidate his government; that, by the aid of his Indians, he may be able to keep the turbulent whites in subjection, and obtain from the overgrown wealth of the clergy the means of establishing the supremacy of law and the authority of the State; and that revolutions may cease to constitute the chronic disease of this unfortunate country. Success to him in his government, and prosperity to him in all his lawful enterprises.

APPENDIX.

A.

MINERIA REPORT ON THE MINERAL RICHES OF SONORA.

Among the five-and-twenty states and territories that compose the Mexican confederation, there is no other which contains in its respective territory the like wonderful mineral riches which abound in the state of which we treat. This would appear almost fabulous; but there is proof enough from the testimony of many residents of that state, and from the assertion of travelers, from the evidences which the archives of the various missions exhibit, and from the royal registry of mines (*reales de minas*), and, lastly, from the indubitable fact of the production of great quantities of gold and silver from the mines and *placers* of this state, considering the small amount of forces, and its isolation from all the principal settlements of the republic by reason of the distance which separates it from them.

In fact, many metals of universal estimation, such as gold, silver, mercury, copper, and iron, in a pure state, in grains, in masses, or in dust, as well as mixed with other metals, superficially or in veins, are found in the extensive territory of Sonora; lead, or combinations of lead, for aiding in extracting metals by fire, and for the construction of munitions of war, amianthus or incombustible crystal, divers ores of copperas, exquisite marble, alabaster, and jasper of various colors, as well as quarries of stone of *chrispa* and magnetic stones, muriate and carbonate of soda, saltpetre or nitrate of potassa, are, in enumeration, the mineral productions which are found in abundance in the territory of the state of So-

nora, which comprehends the region from the river of Fort *Monte Clarasal* at the south to the Gila at the north, and from the Sierra Madre at the east to the Colorado at the northwest.

To the disgrace of the nation, these authentic and exact notices of the marvelous riches of this remote state have availed nothing in determining speculators (*empresarios*) to resort to those places in pursuit of a fortune so certain, or at least to have avoided, by the means of colonization, the loss which is *feared* of this inestimable jewel.

The territory of the state of Sonora lacks nothing but security [from incursions of Indians] in order that the hand of man may be profusely recompensed for his labor. Virgin soils, where the agricultural fruits of all climates not only flourish, but many of these improve in quality; navigable rivers, which contribute in part to the easy transportation of the products to the ports of the Pacific for exportation and consumption; mines and *placers* of precious metals, in many of which there is no necessity of capital to explore and collect them—are not these stimulants enough to attract there a population thrifty and civilized? In order to ascertain the mineral riches which the nation may lose in a short time, we call attention to the mineral statistics which follow, although they are imperfect and diminutive.

As already we have said, the whole of Sonora is mineral; but as among us we only give this name to those places in which there have been discovered and worked a conjunction of veins, it results that the places in this state to which for this cause has been given the name of mineral are thirty-four. Some of the mines are *amparadas* [viz., worked sufficient to confer a legal title to the occupant], and are imperfectly in a state of operation. The names of all of these two classes, which are sixteen in all, are Hermosillo, San Javier, Subiate, Vayoreca, Alamas, Babicanara, Batuco, La Alameda, Rio Chico, El Aguaja, Aigame, El Luaque, Saguaripa, La Trinidad, San Antonio, and El Zoni.

The remaining eighteen are found abandoned, some for the want of water, and others for the want of laborers or

capital, and by the fear which the barbarous Indians inspire. The names of these last minerals are San Juan de Sonora, that of the Sierra at the northwest of Guaymas, Arizuma, Bacauchi, Antunes, San José de Gracia, El Gavilau, San Ildefonso de la Cienequilla, San Francisco el Calou, Santa Rosa, San Antonio de la Huenta, Vadoseco Sobia, Mulatos, Basura, Alamo-Muerto, and San Perfecto.

In the same state have been discovered twenty-one *placers;* of these, one is of virgin silver, in grains and plates (*planchas*), and twenty of pure gold, in grains and dust; but as nearly all these are situated in the mineral districts (*minerales*) already mentioned, the names of those which are not given are the following: Agua Caliente, Quitovac, Las Palomas, La Canaca, and Totahiqui. With the exception of three, to which gold-hunters from time to time resort to relieve their necessities, all the others remain abandoned.

There was only one mineral district actually in work at the close of the last century and the beginning of the present; those now actually in process of being worked are fourteen, and their names are La Grande, La Quintera, El Subiate, Bulbaucda Europita, Vayoreca, La Cotera, Santo Domingo, Noercheran, La Sibertao, Minas-Nuevas, El Tajo, Minas Prietas, and another near La Grande.

From the mineral districts (*minerales*) abandoned there ought to be inferred an increased number of mines, which are in the same condition, but we do not know their names, and we have only notices of the twenty following: Pimas, La Tarasca, Ubalama, Ojito de San Roman, Yaquis, La Guerita, Noaguila, Las Animas, Afuerenos, Piedras-verdes Navares, La Calera, Caugrejos, Guillarmena, San Atilano, San Teodoro, and El Gavilau. In those in Pinas, and in one of those of the *mineral* of San José de Gracia, have been found considerable amounts of pure silver deposited in their veins, and mineral taken from San Teodoro has produced one half silver. In extracting the silver from the ore in this place, we ought to mention that the greater part of these mines are susceptible of great *bonanzas*, from not having been worked extensively, as their proprietors abandoned

them when the metals failed to appear upon the surface, and when the exploration was a little more costly.

There are eleven haciendas in the State of Sonora for purifying the metals which the mines and *placers* produce, without taking into the account many little establishments, with from two to five horse-mills, with one bad furnace for the fusion of metals. Three of these are situated in Alamas, five in Aduana, one in Promontorio, another in Tatagiosa, and the last in Minas Nuevas (New Mines). There are many abandoned mines, as the rubbish and ruins indicate, which we have noticed, in all the abandoned mineral districts.

The methods which they have observed in extracting the metals from the ore are the *patio* [by application of quicksilver in an open yard], and that of fusion, with the aid of some metals that assist the fusion ; but from the fact that the quicksilver augments considerably the price, the few that there carry on the business have preferred the process of fusion to that of the *patio*, from being less costly, and because the docility of the metals afford facilities to this process.

No machines of new invention have been introduced into that state, either for the drainage of the mines or for facilitating the extracting of the metals. This ought not to surprise us, in places so desert and distant from the metropolis, unaccustomed to the vivifying movements of commerce, and to the necessities which civilization has engendered in the more important populations in the central parts of the republic. That which is rare, and ought to call attention, is the exception of some mines, where *malacatos* [water-sacks of bull-hides, drawn up by a windlass] are used for discharging water. In almost all those which have thus been worked, they have not had an opportunity to exhibit their riches, as the abundance of water in many of them was the principal cause of their abandonment.

The greatest difficulty in the way of giving an exact idea of the products of the mines and placers of Sonora is the scandalous contraband exportations of gold and silver which are made from the ports of the Sea of Cortéz [Gulf of Cali-

fornia] on the one hand, and, on the other, the difficulties that have presented themselves to his Excellency, the Governor of that state, for giving the statistical notices which have been sought on repeated occasions by the Junta of the Mineria, both of which causes have made difficult the account which we furnish; but by those which they themselves furnished of the production of those minerals before and since the independence of the nation, and by the exhibits of various witnesses presented in the remission of bars which from thence they made to the capital of the republic, when the ports of the Pacific were sealed to foreign commerce, the production of precious metals having yielded in divers epochs not far from 4500 pounds of silver, without considering the gold (abundant enough in *placers* and in rivers), and from what is known, the quantities of this metal extracted have been considerable, and in more abundance than in the mineral districts of the other states of the republic.

Attention having been much called to the ley and weight of the grains of pure gold found on the surface in Quitovac, Cienequilla, and San Francisco, as well as those masses of virgin silver found in Arizuma, which wonderful riches stimulated the colonial government to despoil the proprietors of it, and afterward the King of Spain, in declaring that it pertained to his royal patrimony.

All those places in Sonora which are actually abandoned, as well as all the lands of that state, are susceptible of producing great riches. The reasons on which these assertions are founded are those which M. Saint Clair Duport mentions in speaking of the probable variation there will be in value of gold and silver in time, by reason of the great extractions hereafter of these metals, particularly in California [this was before the annexation of California] and Sonora, where, as in the Ural Mountains, and the Altai Mountains of Central Asia, gold is extremely abundant, and because in the *placers* mentioned explorers have recognized gold in dust, which they have not washed for want of water in some, and from the difficulty that exists in others in order to work them, such as those of Arizuma and La Papagueria.

Nothing could be said in relation to the number of operatives who are employed in working the mines of this state, nor the day-laborers; nor in respect to articles consumed there, as well in the digging of the metals as in extracting them from the ores, because, as has already been said, his Excellency the Governor has not been able to give the notices which have been sought, and there are no other better authorities through whom information can be procured. For in this state there are no mining courts,* but the ordinary judges of first instance are the authorities which take cognizance of matters which occur in the department of the Mineria.

There are no companies for the exploration of the mines in that remote state. Some inhabitants, in distant periods, have procured the formation of numerous caravans with the character of companies, and with the object of collecting precious metals, which they encountered in the placers of Arizuma and of Papagueria, but until now they have not been able to hold with effect undertakings so laudable.

Various are the causes on account of which the riches which lie buried through all parts of the immense territory of the State of Sonora have not been explored. Some of these reasons have already been referred to, but, for greater clearness, we take this opportunity to recapitulate them all. The first, which are much noted, are the following:

1st. The absolute want of personal security.

2d. The scarcity of population, and of the means of subsistence for the few hands that they were able to have devoted to working mines in the immediate vicinity of hostile Indians.

3d. The irregularity and the want of experience and capital in those who have undertaken the exploration and the extraction of metals, which has occasioned the abandonment

* The title to all mines in Mexico rests solely upon discovery and improvement, without any regard to the proprietorship to the land on which the mines are located; but the proof of discovery and improvement must be made and recorded in the mineral courts, except in Sonora, where the ordinary courts have jurisdiction.

of this class of speculations whenever they presented any difficulties, or commenced to be more costly by failing to produce metals upon the surface of the earth. Some certain speculations which have been directed with regard to the rules which regulate mineral industry, and have been prosecuted with capital, have well compensated the labors and efforts of the proprietors.

Gold and silver, as above said, are not the only mineral productions of Sonorà. In the part of Muchachos, situated in the Sierra Madre, between Tueson and Tubac, and in Mogollon, a place situated in the mountains of Apuchuria, in those of Papagueria, and near the Colorado, are found great masses of virgin iron, and abundant veins of the same metal. Cinnabar was discovered in 1802 in the hill of Santa Teresa, situated in the *mineral* of Rio Chico; and in the hills which are at the north of the Colorado, it has been found in the past age. Copper is also found in Antunes, Tonuco, Bacauchi, Pozo de Crisante, Sierra de Guadalupe, Sierra de la Papagueria, and particularly in the Couanea, from whence have been extracted great quantities of this metal, with a great ley of gold. Metals of lead (*metales plomosos*) abound in Agua Caliente, Alamo-Muerto, La Papagueria, Arispe, and La Cieneguilla. From these two last points have been taken considerable quantities of them, for supplying all other mines of the state [to aid in fusion], and for munitions of war. Copperas, or sulphate of iron, is abundant in San Javier, San Antonio de la Huerta, and Agua Caliente. In the first of these placers a vein runs from south to north, from pieces of which, dissolved in water, there results a tint which, by evaporation, forms into grains, and produces the same effect as the tint of China. In Cucurpe is *amianto*, or incombustible crystal, which the ancients so much valued. Marbles of various classes and colors, as well as alabasters and jaspers, are found in Opasura, Hermosillo, Uores, La Campana, and other points; but we do not know as yet the place from which the Aztecs obtained the beautiful reddish marble which they used in the construction of their divinity of Chapultepec, which is preserved in the National Museum,

and which, according to all conjectures and probabilities, proceeded from the quarries of marble of that state. There are quarries of the stone of chrispa, and even the magnet in Alamas, Hermosillo, in Sierras of the frontier, and in the causada of Barbitas, ten leagues distant from Hermosillo, near the route of La Cieneguilla. Muriate and carbonate of soda, saltpetre, or nitrate of potassa, are found in the margin of the rivers which empty into the Gulf of Cortéz [of California], and particularly in the mouths of the Colorado.

B.

REPORT ON THE MINERAL RICHES OF CHIHUAHUA.

The statistical notices which have until to-day been received, embrace five cantons or departments of that state, which show that there exist in it sixteen *minerals* [districts containing mines], of which twelve are in working, and four abandoned in consequence of the incessant incursions of barbarous Indians. Their names are Hidalgo del Parral, Minas Nuevas, San Francisco del Oro, Santa Barbara, Zopago, Chinipas, Guazapores, Batozegache, Guadalupe y Calvo, Cuacogornichie, Galeana, Cosihuiriachic, Santa Eulalia, Barranco, and two more, without names, in the canton Caleana.

Twenty-one mines are found in operation in the twelve *minerals* in action. The number of those abandoned is increasing, and is not permanent; and the only cause referred to is that many of them are abandoned for want of capital, and others from the hostility of the barbarians. The products of those that were worked in the year 1849 amount to 146,818 marks of silver, of a ley of eleven *dineros*, and 7 marks, 7 oz., and 4 eighths of gold to the twenty-two quintals. The number of haciendas and furnaces for extracting the metal from the ore was twenty, and the processes which they use in that state are the *patio* and the furnace; the last is the most general. Finally, there has been put in practice a third system, by the house of Manning and M'Intosh, for

the purpose of separating the silver by means of the precipitate of copper. The consumptions of the last year, 1849, amount to $544,194, notwithstanding which the notices omit the returns of various mines, haciendas, furnaces, and water-mills. The items are quicksilver at $140 a hundred, gunpowder, lime, wood, sulphate of copper, salt, iron, steel, metals of aid [metals thrown into the compound to aid the process of extracting], tallow, grease, hides, leather, corn, straw, grain, flesh, beans, and bars of iron. The number of operatives is not known with exactness, because the reports only refer to certain mines and haciendas, but in these they amount to 1833, besides day-laborers at five *reals* ($\frac{5}{8}$ths of a dollar) a day for half the time. The most important improvements that have been introduced into some of these mines consist in the establishment of pumps for facilitating draining, and in the introduction of German ovens for fusing a greater quantity of mineral at a less cost and with greater perfection, being so much the more interesting as the condition of the metals presents itself more easily to this kind of benefiting.

Four companies have been established for prosecuting the labor of the mines, Preseña, Rosario, Tajo, and Prieta. The first takes its name from Señor Delille, the second is composed of Mexicans, and the last two are composed of Mexicans, English, and naturalized Spaniards. Nothing is known in relation to their capitals. Besides the precious metals, we find lead in Naica and Babisas, of the canton of Matamoros; copper, from which only *magistral* is taken, is found in the canton of Mina, and sulphur and saltpetre in the canton of Iturbide. The reports mention nothing in respect to the authorities that take cognizance of the affairs of the Mineria; but it is presumed that, as in the rest of the nation, the judges of first instance take knowledge of controversies, and the courts of mines, if by chance they are established, take cognizance of the economy and government of the mines.

The mint of Guadalupe and Calvo coined in 1848, $720,765, and in 1849, $665,225, of which two sums $1,027,130 were of silver, and $355,859 in gold, the whole being the proceeds of 116,015 marks, 1 oz., and 4 eighths of silver, of the ley of

eleven *dineros*, and of 2351 marks, 5 oz., 2 eighths of gold, with ley of twenty-two carats. This appears from the reports of the mint of the capital of that state.

C.

REPORT ON THE MINERAL RICHES OF COAHUILA.

This state, one of the least populous, and exposed, like all the frontier states of the north, to the incessant incursions of the barbarous tribes, offers at present very little interest to those speculations which engender the exercise of mineral industry—that which, besides experience and capital, requires for its development an abundance of hands and entire security. While the publication of the mineral statistics of the nation not only brings the idea of manifesting the present condition of this branch of industry among us, but also that of propagating its exercise as one of the principal elements of riches among the Mexicans, it is necessary to speak of the state in which the Mineria is in Coahuila, and of hopes which it makes to spring up for the future. There are twelve mines actually *amparadas*, or in labor, in the four *minerals* already mentioned: their names are unknown to us, and it is only known that their monthly products amount to 200 marks [of 8 ounces] of silver and 150 loads of *greta* [litharge]. The number of operatives employed in all these amount to 193, and the day laborers receive four *reals* [half a dollar] a day.

There is no exact notice of the number of mineral districts and single mines abandoned in the State of Coahuila; but the number is considerable, according to the information furnished from 1843 by the deputation of Santa Rosa. Among those deserving a particular mention is that of the Sierra de Timulco and that of Potrerillos, by the good ley of the metals of the mines of the first, and by the uniformity of the veins and not unappreciable richness of the second. These veins run generally from northwest to southeast, and in the course they encounter, scattered about, silver-bearing

galena [sulphuret of lead], lead, copper, with sulphuret of zinc. The amount of the consumptions of the mines that are worked is also unknown; but it is known that the gunpowder costs the operators $9 an aroba [of 25 pounds], of lead, $12 a carga of 300 pounds; that of *greta*, $6; copper, of superior quality, $16 the hundred weight; the carga of coal, six *reals* [three fourths of a dollar], and wood, one *real* a mule-load. The ruins and the heaps of rubbish manifest that in other times there was much activity in the labor of the mines and haciendas for separating the metals; but to-day there are only in existence some furnaces, which are the least costly, which the miners of Coahuila can use for their metals. This they effect generally in ovens, and in *galemes* in the open plain. But this method of separating the metals, which Coahuilans have been necessitated to adopt as the least expensive, until quicksilver has notably fallen in price, has not remained stationary, as in other parts of the republic. These simple inhabitants have succeeded, by the force of experiments, in obtaining as a result the power of fusing 25 cargas [of 300 pounds] of metal, with the aggregation of 18 cargas of *greta*, in only one furnace and in the space of twenty-four hours, by consuming only 45 pounds of coal for each carga of metal.

There are three companies in that state for working the mines in the mineral district of Ramirez, and another in that of Trinudco. There is no notice of the amount of funds employed, but it is presumed that they are not considerable, by considering the smallness of the fortunes of the inhabitants of the frontier.

In government and economy of mines the Assembly of Mineria of the valley of Santa Rosa have jurisdiction, but in litigations the judges of first instance have jurisdiction, to whom a particular law of this state gives authority.

In Coahuila, besides silver, there is found virgin iron in masses of considerable volume and of extraordinary value in the Sierra of Mercudo, in Guadalupe, and other points.

There is copper in Putula or Rios and in Guadalupe. In these mineral districts we also encounter lead. *Amianto*

(incombustible crystal) also abounds in Niezca and in the vicinity of Monclova, as also nitre in San Blas, jurisdiction of San Buonaventura. In the hills of Gizedo, correspondent to the district of Santa Rosa, are extracted sulphur and copperas.

It is difficult to ascertain and to mention all the causes which have led to the decadence of the mineral industry of this state, because the reports which the authorities have remitted do not state it exactly; but there is no doubt that they are two, viz., the want of security occasioned by the frequent incursions of the barbarians, and the little affection which the agricultural people that occupy that state have for mining enterprises; that, as already said, they require recognizances, as well as capital and hands, things which are scarce enough in the vast territory of the frontier state of Coahuila.

D.

REPORT ON THE MINERAL RICHES OF LOWER CALIFORNIA.

The sparse population of this territory, the want of scientific information in its inhabitants, and the difficulties which have existed in the way of keeping up an intercourse with their fellow-citizens of the centre of the republic, are causes weighty enough for explaining the ignorance in which we live concerning the mineral riches of that interesting peninsula. Without doubt, if we are permitted to judge of it from the abundance of the precious metals which California of the North and Sonora contain, and their contiguities, we ought to infer that in the territory of Southern California the designated metals should be found in considerable quantities. The official notices which we possess in respect to Lower California fortify this conjecture. Those exhibited by persons who lack competent instruction upon this point contribute in part to foretell what will be the grade of prosperity which will come in time with the developing of the mineral industry in this territory.

Southern California, by its topographical position alone, is called to occupy an important place, not only among the integral parts of the nation, but even among foreign parts of America which are bounded by the Pacific. If its first necessity is attended to, with the augmentation of population commerce will come to give it the consequent movement and animation, and the Mineria will come to complete the circle of its prosperity; so that it is now difficult to perceive the grand importance, commercial and political, which this despised peninsula, which is called Lower California, will yet attain when the transition of time and the sequel of events come to realize these Utopian offspring of a patriotic sentiment; but we will occupy ourselves with the statistical mineral notices of that territory.

There are nine mineral districts (*minerales*) which are now recognized in California: their names are San Antonio, Zule, Santa Anna, Muleje, Triumpho, Las Virgenes, El Valle Perdido, Los Flores, Cuecuhilas. There is a range traversing from north to south for the space of forty leagues in that territory, which contains also a multitude of veins which have not been explored. In all these minerals abound, but the irregular and inconstant labor of some of the mines does not permit us to consider them as in action.

Explorations of some mines of gold and silver have been made in California, but they remain in the same state with the other *minerales*. One and another have been worked superficially, but their possessors abandoned them when they presented any obstacle, which made the working more costly, so that it is no exaggeration to say they all are now abandoned. In a country almost a wilderness (*desierto*), where the want of conveniences in exploration of the mines failed to engender the stimulus of acquiring and preserving the proprietorship of the discoveries,* and where, with the same facility with which they abandon one known vein, they

* The proprietorship of mines in Mexico is acquired by proof being made to the mining court of discovery and actual working; and is again lost by an abandonment of four months; there is no other source of title to mineral lands.

proceed to work another new vein—in a country where the great part of the inhabitants might well be considered as tribes that have only reached the first grades of civilization, rather than organized societies, it is not strange that there is a want of mineral recognizances where only the mines at which the metals are easily procured, and not costly in extracting from the ore, are worked.

Notwithstanding that which has been said, there are various residents of the mineral districts referred to that extract gold and silver sufficient to cover their commercial transactions, to pay their laborers and the salaries of their operatives, to procure certain necessaries, and to enjoy certain luxuries which many of their fellow-citizens do not enjoy. To ascertain to what value these extractions of metals ascend is extremely difficult for the want of data with which to aid any calculation.

The benefiting (extracting the metals from the ores) is no less imperfectly done than the labor of the mines. There are no haciendas for benefiting; many persons that engage themselves in mining speculations have in that territory one, two, and even five horse-mills, with which they grind the metal; this they mix with quicksilver and salt—imitating the process by the *patio*—in proportion of 50 pounds of the first and 75 of the second to 625 (25 arobas) of metal, and, proceeding by means of fusion in bad ovens, they obtain silver. Some others obtain it by means of vases of refining with the aid of lead.

The consumptions of the Californians in the extraction of the precious metals consist of quicksilver, salt, and wood; the first they have purchased in the last years at two dollars a pound, the second at thirty-seven and a half cents for twenty-five pounds, and the third at a quarter of a dollar a mule-load. It is to be presumed that when the quicksilver of Northern California comes to compete with the quicksilver of Spain in the mineral districts of the interior* of the republic, the price of this principal element for conducting the working of mines will fall greatly in all the nation, and that

* This term is applied to all places distant from the capital.

the Mineria will assume a grade of prosperity never yet seen in our country; and Lower California, by its proximity to the places of the production of mercury, will obtain it, without doubt, at a still lower price. The day-laborers, who work the mines of this territory, receive for their labor from seventy-five cents to one dollar; but there is not a fixed number, neither is their occupation constant.

It is not necessary to speak of the existence of companies for exploring mines in a country where there is such a scarcity of population, and where there is not an accumulation of capital sufficient in order that a part of it might be employed in the hazardous enterprises of mineral industry. The judges of first instance are the authorities that in Lower California take cognizance of all accounts concerning the affairs of mines (*á la Mineria*).

In the river which passes by Muleje and Gallinas, the inhabitants of those places collect the sands, from which they obtain small quantities of gold in dust. In another placer, which embraces an extension of seven leagues, they also extract some gold in dust in quantities as insignificant as those which result from the sands of the river mentioned.

Silver and gold are the only metals that have claimed the attention of the Californians, because they derive an advantage from their extraction, and not because there do not exist other metals less valuable, but which yield proportionably greater profit to the miners that undertake the exploration; these are lead, copper, iron, magistral, crystal of Roca, loadstone, and alum.

E.

THE REMAINS OF CORTÉZ.

The account of the disposition of the remains of Cortéz, given on page 279, is the one commonly received, and contained in works of standard authority. Since this volume was placed in the hands of the printers, I have received a new number of the *Apuentes Históricos*, which contains an-

other account, which is undoubtedly the true one. According to this, when the body of Cortéz was first brought to America, it was taken to Tezcuco, and buried at the San Franciscan convent, beside that of his friend, King Don Fernando. In the course of the following century it was taken to Mexico and buried in the convent of the Jesuits (the Profor is probably intended). After the Revolution, it was transported to Sicily by the agent of his descendant, the present "Marquis of the Valley."

THE END.




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